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Thoughts on various subjects

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THOUGHTS

ON



VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

✓
BY REV. R. DONNELL,
OF THE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

"Try all things, hold fast that which is good."—PETER.

LOUISVILLE, KY.

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

IN a country of equal rights, it is the privilege of every one to think freely, investigate fairly, and explain in the most simple, plain and candid manner. Truth acknowledges no dependence on sophistry for success. It relies alone upon fair argument, and, when properly understood, appears well even in a homely dress.

It is the duty of every branch of the Church, when circumstances require it, to give her view of what the Bible teaches. Concealment, double-dealing and mental reservations, in such cases, should always be carefully avoided.

The Cumberland Presbyterians have adopted a system of doctrines, in the belief and practice of which they are, perhaps, as firm and uniform as any other denomination. While they claim the privilege of believing that this system is fully sustained by the word of God, they are very far from arrogating to themselves INFALLIBILITY in interpreting the Holy Scriptures. They have ever maintained, that a difference in subordinate points of doctrine, ought not to constitute *separate communions*, or destroy the UNITY of the church of Christ.

Although they have adopted and published to the world, a Confession of Faith, and a system of Church Government, yet they have probably been remiss in not giving

these formularies a more general circulation. In this they are entirely singular. Other branches of the Church exercise a laudible diligence in putting the volume containing their peculiarities in the hand of every individual within their reach. They thereby manifest not only sincerity in their belief, but a wish to disseminate what they deem correct principles.

The Cumberland Presbyterians have heretofore, manifested but little interest in writing and publishing arguments for the purpose of defending the doctrines of their Church. Their fields of operation have been large and white unto harvest and have required the active and constant labors of all their preachers. This, in connection with a desire to *fraternize* with all religious denominations, has been, perhaps, of some disadvantage to them. It is still hoped, however, that they will forever banish that little sectarian bigotry that has on some occasions emanated from the presses of other branches of the Church.

The following thoughts and historical sketch have been elicited by frequent applications from abroad, for information concerning the doctrines and origin of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, of which the writer has the honor of being a member. He hopes they will not infringe upon that spirit of *harmony* and *union* which he wishes at all times to prevail among evangelical denominations.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

SEVERAL years ago the author consented to the publication of a pamphlet entitled "Miscellaneous Thoughts on several subjects of Divinity, so much controverted in the World." This little work, so far as appears, met with the general approbation of the Church of which he is a member and minister.

Long has he been urged by many of his brethren to prepare and publish to the world an enlarged edition of this production. With these urgent solicitations, he has ever felt inclined to comply. But his numerous and pressing calls, have hitherto prevented him. Being one of the oldest ministers of his denomination, the care for all the Churches devolved to some extent upon his mind. His presence was loudly and imperiously called for in many parts of the Church, which necessarily enlarged the field of his ministerial operations, as well as multiplied his many and arduous duties. Necessarily, much of his time and labors have been spent from home.

During the period in which he has endeavored to meet these numerous and pressing calls, he has from time to time, as circumstances might suggest to his mind, snatched a few hurried moments from other engagements, to throw a few other miscellaneous thoughts together for the columns of the "Banner of Peace," and other religious periodicals of the Church. Having at length, become advanced in life, and well worn in

the service of the Church, and in the cause of his Divine Master, he has, of necessity, become somewhat more local.

To meet the present demands of the Church, and to enable him with more convenience hereafter to revise and enlarge his little Book, the author has resolved to collect from the files of his religious papers, the short pieces written by him from time to time, and add these to *Miscellaneous Thoughts*, and thus enlarge his *Miscellaneous Book*, and send it out to a *Miscellaneous Public*. Should life be continued a few years, he fondly hopes to have it in his power to enlarge this volume; but should he be removed from the Church below before that time, he desires that some of his surviving brethren, more capable than he now feels himself to be, will take up this little volume and enlarge, extend and perpetuate these very *miscellaneous* thoughts—they are thoughts upon the Bible—and, if according to that book, they are thoughts of *truth*. The only desire of the author, in sending these thoughts to the world, is, that they may inspire those under whose observation they may happen to fall, with thoughts of truth—that thought may thus inspire thought, and the truth be perpetuated in the Church, and in the world. When the general mass of mind shall all *think* according to the truth, then will all be free from error and sin, and be sanctified and happy.

THE AUTHOR.

Athens, Ala., May 3, 1851

MISCELLANEOUS THOUGHTS,

&c.

ON THE CHARACTER OF GOD.

“God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth,” possessing, in himself, the rule and power of his own actions.

There are two ideas concerning the nature and actions of Deity, both of which have been carried to extremes. One is, that holiness *is not* essential to his existence; that it *is not* the source of the motives of his volitions and actions at all; but that it depends entirely on his sovereign will. The other idea is, that God is essentially holy; in which consists the essence of the moral law, which, when revealed, became the rule of action to every moral subject; yet, his knowledge and power, with regard to sovereign influence, and the certainty of action, are abridged. It maintains the certainty of rule and freedom of action, but leaves him without the knowledge and control of his subjects.

The following view of this subject seems, to me, to accord best with Scripture and reason :—God is essentially holy, without which he could not exist ; for quality belongs both to spirit and matter. Matter cannot exist without the quality of gravitation ; spirit cannot exist without a quality inclining it either to good or evil : therefore, you see that God must be holy. This is the lustre and glory of his character, the rule of all his volitions and actions, from which he can never deviate. All that he does is holy, not because he possesses absolute freedom of will, but because his will always acts according to his own nature. If the holiness of God depended on his agency or volition, it follows, of course, that he could not be holy until he desired to be so ; or, in other words, decreed what holiness should be. Then, here would be a volition without holiness, and, also, without motive. If there be no principle of rectitude in the Divine Being, nothing can be done right ; if nothing can be done right, there can be no glory. But, God is holy, and whatever consists with holiness, he can do ; and whatever will contribute most to his glory, He *will do*.

As holiness is the principle, out of which all the motives and volitions of Deity spring, it is evident that he never could have decreed sin, without going out of himself for a motive ; and if he were to go out of himself for a motive, he

would cease to be a self-sufficient and perfect God. If holiness cannot present sin as a motive, God never could choose sin; if he could not make it his choice, he could not bring it to pass by his agency.

Infinite knowledge is as essential to the existence of God as consummate holiness. While one renders every thing that he does correct, the other makes all things certain that transpire in the universe.

Some have thought, that God's knowledge of events rested solely on his decrees; that he could not know that any thing would take place but for a previous determination to bring it to pass. This hypothesis either proves that God is the author of sin, or that he knows nothing of its existence; both of which would be contrary to divine revelation. It is indispensable that an intelligent being should know all that he does, but it is not necessary for him to do all that he knows. If God can know any thing without first decreeing it, he can know many things. Hence, I conclude, that many events *have* and do transpire, which, though known unto God, were never predestinated by him. I think the following is a correct view of this subject. All things are known unto God, yet he knows some things as taking place on or by his own agency, others on the principle of necessity, and others on the principle of man's agency.

Knowledge must always go before volition a choice without understanding, is a blind choice, and the action is not that of an intelligent being.

ON THE TRINITY.

1. THERE is one God. There is but one. There can be but one. But this one God is often spoken of in the Old Testament by means of the plural number, "Let us make man, &c." The New Testament reveals how many persons there are, and likewise their different names, viz., Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Unity of God is taught in the Bible. The Trinity and equality of God are taught in the Bible. The Trinity and inequality of God are taught in the Bible.

2. There are certain peculiarities which constitute the Unity of God; certain peculiarities which constitute the Trinity and equality of God; and certain peculiarities which constitute the Trinity and inequality of God.

3. Infinite perfection constitutes the Unity of God. There is but one Infinity. There can be but one. There are three persons, subsistences, or agents, that possess infinite perfection and are one God. Power to will and work constitutes

an agent. The Father has power to will and work, the Son has power to will and work; and the Holy Spirit has power to will and work; therefore they are all agents. They are not one agent, but one God, possessing infinite perfection. They are, distinctly, objects of worship. One is not older or greater than another.

But there is a sense, in which they are three, and not equal. In the plan of man's redemption, one was appointed to overlook, and a name given him appropriate to his office. He is called the Father. Another to obey and suffer. He is called the Son. Another to apply the redemption to man, by converting and sanctifying him. He is called the Holy Ghost; not because he is more holy than the Father and the Son, but because his office is to make men holy.

But the sceptic exclaims, I cannot understand this TRINITY in UNITY. I answer, your understanding was never intended to be the standard of truth. There are many truths entirely above your comprehension. All that you have to do, or can do, is, to determine whether it would be more reasonable to receive or reject them. Did you ever know a circle three feet in circumference, inclose one of ten feet? *Infinite fulness dwells in Christ.* If he had a beginning in *all* his natures, he must be finite: then, here would be finite, containing infinite! Whether the doctrine of the Trinity be comprehensible or not, it is a matter

of Divine revelation, and demands our faith. But am I told that mystery is inconsistent with the idea of a revelation from God? This I deny. A revelation is a developement of facts, and is not at all affected, though the mode by which the facts exist, be withheld. The Trinity is a fact revealed, and, notwithstanding the mode of the existence of this fact is not disclosed, its claims upon our credulity cannot be denied, without becoming downright Atheists; for, a God existing in one person, is as incomprehensible as a God in three persons.

It is something remarkable, that, in every age, where the UNITY of God, in opposition to the TRINITY, has been taught, infidels express great friendship for the system. This must be owing to the fact, that there is something in this system agreeable to the carnal heart, and contrary to Divine revelation.

ON THE CREATION OF MAN.

MAN was created with wisdom to *know*, and power to *do*, all things which came within the capacity of created free agency. This alone could constitute him an accountable being. He, of course, possessed determining power. To say that man is a free agent, and yet hold that God

determines his will by physical power, is, to me, a palpable contradiction. The light and motive system, which is, that the will of man is determined by an *over balance* of motive, is equally absurd; for, in this case, the *motive* would contain the physical power. I, therefore, contend, that the agency of man, in his primitive state, consisted in an ability to decide between two opposite motives, neither of which exerted any *physical force* on his will.

He was, also, either holy, or unholy, *in nature*: for we have already shown, that every intelligent being must have a *disposing quality*. That this quality in man was *holy*, is evident from the consideration, that nothing of a contrary character can proceed from a Holy God.

ON THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD.

THE government of God is a *holy* and *wise* polity, including sovereignty, necessity, and free agency in his subjects. I am persuaded, it would be impossible to conceive of a well-organized government, without these three particulars. A government founded altogether on sovereignty is *despotic*, and precludes the necessity of laws, and destroys the freedom of its subjects. The design of laws, is, that the subjects may shape their

characters by them. But, in a government possessing nothing but *sovereignty*, neither law nor subjects can have any thing to do in forming characters. Sovereignty, alone, does this. Then, why are laws necessary, and on what principle can subjects, in this case, either be accountable or punishable? It is neither an action nor the consequences of an action, abstractly considered, that renders the subject of it guilty; but the exercise of *free agency*, in the perpetration of that action. Punishment then becomes necessary, and this prepares the way for the exercise of sovereignty. Thus, you see, how these three particulars harmonize in a well-organized government.

ON THE LAW OF GOD.

THERE is a universal and immutable law, generally called *moral*, which is not dependent on sovereign power for its existence, but grows out of the eternal reason of things, and regards all circumstances of intelligent beings, and enjoins the duties which they owe to God and each other. Without such a universal standard of right and wrong, there could be no distinction between virtue and vice.

This law is the great platform on which heaven itself is built, and on which Adam was placed in his state of innocence: but, while on trial, he fell from this platform, and can never return to it again, by any efforts of his own. If he is ever brought up to the righteousness and holy nature of the law, it must be by the aid of another. For this purpose, the gospel scheme has been introduced, which serves as a ladder, on which fallen man may not only return to that state of holiness and happiness possessed by Adam before he fell, but to that confirmed state which he would have enjoyed, had he sustained his trial. But the gospel is not designed to destroy the law, any more than the making of a ladder to reach a platform, is designed to destroy that platform.

If a sinner would ascend to this desirable platform, he must climb the gospel ladder, by repentance and faith.

Every one must conform to this law that would be happy; and it is not material how many rational beings there are, nor where they reside, nor how many peculiarities attend them, if they be conformed to it, they will be happy; for they all harmonize: and, without a universal and immutable law, or standard of moral rectitude, they *would not*, and *could not* harmonize. This is evident, even from the law of matter. If, for instance, one particle of matter be under a different law from another, how could they

harmonize! If Mercury were under a different law from Venus, or the Earth, how could there be harmony in the solar system? There is harmony in the solar system; therefore, there is an immutable and universal law of matter: and it is by the same law, that the lofty pine falls, that the autumnal leaf drops to the ground. And so we may suppose, not only of a great number of bodies of matter, but of a great number of peculiar systems of matter; yet, as far as matter extends, the immutable law by which it is governed, is founded; hence, there is general harmony throughout the natural world. Just so in art: if you wish to build an edifice, it is not important where you prepare the materials, provided you make every part according to an immutable rule: when put together, each joint will fit, and all will harmonize. But, if you were to make one part according to one rule, and another part according to another rule, your building would neither possess wisdom, strength, nor beauty.

The same will apply to civil matters. Let the law of virtue be immutable, and millions of rational beings be governed by it, and general harmony will prevail; but if they were to be governed by laws differing *in principle* from each other, it is evident a harmonious system could not be formed. For example: life and liberty are the natural rights of all men. On this principle the

Constitution of the thirteen United States was adopted; yet each State was tolerated to have a constitution of its own, adapted to its local circumstances, but could not introduce a single article contrary to the principles of the general Constitution. This would have destroyed the harmony of the several States.

In ecclesiastical affairs, harmony is also based upon certain immutable principles. Love to God and each other, should constitute the grand principles of our Church government. Embracing these principles of government, the Church may be divided into several territories, and each one introduce a discipline adapted to its own peculiar situation; yet, if the grand principles (love to God and each other) be preserved, all can unite and form one harmonious body. But, wherever these immutable principles are touched by a creed or discipline, that denomination, holding such, can never be received into the union by the Great Head of the Church.

Then, my brethren, let us be careful not to introduce such rules in our Churches, as would destroy love to the brethren, and produce distraction in the body of Christ. We are all one in Christ Jesus: let us, therefore, keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

ON THE FALL OF MAN.

MAN, though made upright, was not confirmed. To create an intelligent being in a confirmed state, would destroy his agency ; but to create him pure and free, and give him a probation, in which his fidelity can be tested—if he prove faithful, he can, then, be confirmed according to character formed during the trial. The condition on which man was to be confirmed, was obedience to a positive command, founded on the moral law. His agency, in this state of trial, was tested in a very simple manner. God commanded him not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and enforced the prohibition by the threatening of death to himself and posterity ; but promised life in case of obedience.

That Adam might have a view of the state in which he was placed, and, also, of that which was promised him, God placed two trees before him, viz., the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which represented that the condition in which he was then placed admitted of his acting so as to know good and evil ; and the tree of life, representing, that if he obeyed the positive precept, he should be confirmed in a state of complete happiness.

After man had violated the positive command, God placed a cherubim, with a flaming sword, which turned every way, to guard the tree of life, lest man should put forth his hand and eat, and live for ever, or be confirmed in a state of sin and misery.

ON THE CHARACTER OF THE MEDIATOR.

JESUS CHRIST possesses *three simple distinct natures*, viz., *Supreme divinity*, spirit, and matter. These three natures, though united in one person, are not amalgamated. Man has two simple natures: spirit, and matter. Spirit can suffer, but cannot die; matter can both suffer and die. In addition to these two natures, Jesus Christ has divine nature, which can neither suffer nor die. These *three*, constitute him a complete Mediator for man. Like man, for whose benefit he came into our world, he had a nature that could suffer and die; a nature that could suffer, but could not die; and, as *God*, he had a nature that could neither suffer nor die. This nature gave worth, or virtue, to the obedience and sufferings of his soul and body: so that a temporary suffering, on his part, was of more value, in the eye of the law, than eternal suffering, on our part, could have been. The soul and body being

united to the divine nature, in person, it was impossible for the one always to suffer, or for the other to remain under the power of death. He, therefore, as our Mediator, took away the sting of death, and the power of the grave, and brought life and immortality to light.

Man's death is a doctrine founded on the law: his resurrection is a doctrine founded on the Gospel:—*For as in Adam, all died, even so, in Christ, shall all be made alive.* As Christ arose for all men, he must have died for *all*; for the resurrection of *all*, is founded on his rising for *all*; and his rising for *all*, is founded on his having died for *all*: for he could not rise for any for whom he did not die.

ON THE EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT.

ALL agree, that Jesus Christ *died for sinners*; but whether he died only for a part, or the whole of mankind, we differ. Those who contend, that Christ only died for a part of the human family, maintain, that that part was elected, from eternity, to everlasting life, and that the rest of mankind were fore-ordained to everlasting death. Others believe, that the death of Christ was a governmental thing, intended, merely, to restore the

honors of the law, by which, all legal barriers have been removed, and that God may, upon the principles of justice, save all the human family; yet, he only designs to save a part of mankind, whose hearts he changes by a sovereign act, without considering unbelief as a legal barrier, or sufficient to deprive the sinner of the blessing of regeneration.

On this subject, *I will also give my opinion.* I believe, that Jesus Christ was chosen as the second head, and representative for all that were involved by the first Adam; that all the guilty, depraved sons and daughters of the first representative, were chosen *in* the second, not first to a state of glory, but to a state of trial. If they, during this state of probation, obtain a freedom from guilt, and a right to life eternal, then they are appointed to a state of glory. All mankind, by virtue of the atonement, have a personal opportunity of becoming confirmed for a state of happiness.

The Gospel is proposed to us, as a covenant, in which we are made a party. We now have the terms of this covenant under consideration. But the Gospel would be vague, if no time was specified, in which these terms must be complied with. It is necessary for the will of man to determine, while the condition of this covenant is before him, to be saved by the second Adam. So soon as this determination takes place, he is justified—entitled to heaven; adopted into the heavenly family; and

sealed to the day of redemption. On the other hand, the sinner that determines to reject Christ, after having had a fair opportunity of embracing the benefits of his death, is also sealed to everlasting misery.

ON THE OPERATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

ALL that I will now say on this subject, may be resolved into three parts:

- 1st. *The necessity of divine agency.*
- 2nd. *On what divine influence is founded.*
- 3rd. *The extent of this influence.*

There is a necessity for divine agency in the world, not only to reveal the plan of salvation, and establish, by prophecy and miracles, that plan; but to quicken the soul, by giving the true spiritual meaning of the system of salvation. Paul was *alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and he died.* He had been instructed in the letter of the commandment, but did not understand the spiritual meaning thereof. It was this spiritual meaning that he refers to, which came by the agency of the Holy Spirit, who dictated the commandment, and has not only a right to dictate, but, also, to explain his own doctrine.

If man were only guilty, a simple declaration of the fact would be sufficient; but he is depraved also, by which, I understand, *the head sick, and heart faint*. His heart is not only opposed to the plan by which he is to be saved, but his understanding is dark, and he is ignorant of that plan. He, therefore, not only needs instruction, but quickening; for, no man can say, that *Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost: without holiness, no man shall see the Lord*: and it belongs to his office to make men holy. There is, therefore, a necessity for divine influence on our hearts, in order to salvation; and what is necessary for the world, is necessary for every individual.

But, secondly: On what is divine influence founded? Some say, on the revealed will, or Word of God; and the reason why the Spirit operates, is because men have that revelation; and *his* influence is only felt by those who have the *Bible*; and, beyond the extent of the letter, there is no *Spirit*. But, I think, the only reason why the Spirit operates on the world, is because an atonement has been *made for the world* by the death of Christ. And, so far are his operations from being founded on the revelation, that, the revelation is founded on his *operation*. There was a *Spirit* before there was a Bible, or a Preacher, or a Church; and the Bible, the Preacher, and the Church, are the *effects* of his *operation*. *He* inspired the men who wrote the

Bible; *he* calls the men who preach; convinces the sinner; and seals the believer to the day of complete redemption.

Thirdly: As to the extent of divine operation, some, who maintain the agency of the Spirit, seem to limit his operations to those, and those only, who have the Bible, and other means of grace. They measure the extent of divine influence by the extent of the circulation of the written word. But, I think, we ought only to limit the Spirit's operation by the *atonement*. If, then, Christ tasted death for every man, and the atonement is *made for the world*, the world is the field of divine operation. I regard the written word, and all the means of grace, as excellent facilities of spiritual and moral instruction; yet, they only answer a similar purpose to that of a useful apparatus in an institution of learning, in which the teacher's presence is still necessary, and his agency important; and, although his books may answer a valuable purpose, yet, he can learn a student without them.

How many hearts were converted before there was a Bible? It will not do to say that men only had the spirit of prophecy; they, also, must have had the spirit of conviction, to lead them to a knowledge of salvation. But, suppose we limit the spirit to the written word, or a knowledge of the written word, then, all infants, dying in infancy, as well as all idiots, are cut off from salvation.

There is a beauty in the *Trinity*, and the most perfect unison of office, in our salvation. The Father *loved the world*—the Son *died for the world*—and, the Spirit *convinces the world*. The *office* of the Spirit, is founded on the *office* of the Son; and the *office* of the Son, is founded on the *office* of the Father. The Father *loved all*, the Son *atoned for all*, and the Spirit *strives with all*; and, to facilitate his work, he dictated the Bible—and now calls men to preach the Gospel, convinces the sinner, and sanctifies the believer. Oh, may the Spirit be poured out from on high, and the *wilderness become a fruitful field, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ*.

ON THE WILL OF MAN.

THAT man is accountable for his actions—that an accountable being must be free—and that a free agent must possess determining power somewhere, are ideas generally believed by Christians; but they differ very widely with regard to the origin of this power. Some think that man, though rational, is entirely incapable of volition or action, without the immediate agency of God, notwithstanding motives from Heaven, Earth, and Hell, may be present.

Others believe that he forms all his volitions in view of motives, *without* immediate agency, and that the mind is preponderated by an *over-balance* of motive. Others, again, think, that the will is not determined by the immediate agency of God, nor yet by an over-balance of motive; but that man, though fallen, has power to determine right and wrong, without divine influence. They also deny the doctrine of the Trinity, and operations of the Holy Spirit; while others, although they admit the doctrine of the Trinity, the operations of the Spirit, and the influence of motive, to a *certain extent*, yet they contend, that the will is not determined by the immediate agency of God, nor by an over-balance of motive, and that man, in his fallen state, has no *depraved self-determining* power to do good; that without something to counteract his depraved nature, it would constantly determine his will to evil; and although he would choose sin freely, yet he would choose it necessarily, for he could choose nothing else. But they hold, that by the enlightening influence of the Holy Ghost, man's will is untrammelled, and restored to the privilege of choosing Heaven, as well as Hell. Hence, they think that he can do, under the Gospel, what he could not have done without it, and what he cannot do, when the influence of the Spirit shall be withdrawn from him. This last view of the will, I think, is correct, and it gives God all the glory of **man's**

salvation, and lays the guilt of damnation at every sinner's door.

But if it be said, that man, by being placed under a dispensation of mercy, and receiving the light and influence of the Spirit of God, cannot determine either good or evil, without the *sovereign* and *immediate agency* of God, then, *Divine agency* must lie at the bottom of every volition and action of man, whether good or bad. This doctrine would present man as a mere instrument, and God the principal agent in all his actions, and must receive the praise or blame of all that is done. Indeed, upon this plan, I cannot see how sin could exist at all; for, if it be by the agency of God that man sins, he must decree all the actions of man; and if he both decree, and bring to pass, all that man does, by his *own immediate agency*, all that is done, must be right; for God can neither decree nor execute that which is wrong. Is not this the foundation of *Universalism*, and many other *isms* so destructive in the world?

To hang every volition on the power of motive, alone, may conceal, but can never remove the difficulty just noticed. True, this scheme presents the will as choosing freely, but it also chooses necessarily; for, in whatever end of the scale you place the greatest weight, that end, of course, will fall; and it may fall freely, too: yet, if it cannot turn the other way, it falls necessarily. One penny-weight in the other end of the scale, would cause

it to fall, and the first one to rise. So you see, that, to govern the will of man by an *over balance* of motive, as effectually destroys his accountability as to govern it by *immediate agency*.

The doctrine that fallen man, unaided by divine influence, can choose salvation, is also absurd. It robs God of all the glory of man's redemption, and is entirely inconsistent with the Bible.

The truth, then, seems to be this: Fallen man can, upon the Gospel plan, choose *life* or *death*, *blessing* or *cursing*. This is abundantly evident from the word of God: "*Choose you this day whom ye will serve;*" Josh. xxiv. 15. "*Ye will not come to me that ye might have life;*" John v. 40. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely;" Rev. xxii. 17.

ON MAN'S AUTHORITY TO BELIEVE IN CHRIST.

FAITH in Christ, is composed of two parts: assent and consent to be saved on Gospel terms. But is every sinner authorized to do this? I answer, yes: every sinner to whom the Gospel is preached, has sufficient authority to believe that Christ died for *him*, and, therefore, is at liberty to believe in him.

1. Every sinner has negative testimony to believe, that Christ died for him. "*Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked ;*" Ezek. xxxiii. 11. "*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness, but is long suffering to us ward, not willing that any should perish ;*" 2 Pet. iii. 9. But negative testimony is not sufficient to induce a sinner to believe that God is willing to save *him*. Had God sent the whole human family to hell, without providing salvation for any, it would have been no more than the infliction of a just punishment ; yet, he would have had no pleasure in their death ; therefore, a sinner must have positive, as well as negative testimony, before he can believe in Christ. This kind of testimony is also to be found in the Bible. "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life ;*" John iii. 16. "*Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth ;*" 1 Tim. ii. 4.

Before a minister of the Gospel can assure any sinner that Christ died *for him*, and call on him to believe, he must have authority to say, that he died for every sinner. Without such authority, he cannot urge one sinner to believe in Christ, without acting presumptuously. Nor has any sinner *a right*, without this knowledge, to believe

in Christ: in so doing, he would also act presumptuously. Therefore, a preacher must have evidence to believe that Christ died for all men, before he can offer salvation to any; and a sinner must have evidence also to believe, that Christ tasted death for *every man*, before he can say he died for him. The Bible contains the *names* of no particular individuals for whom Christ died. God makes no private communication to either preacher or sinner, on this subject; Therefore, it appears clear, that if God, the Father, only chose to save a part of mankind; and God, the Son, only died for that part; that neither the elect nor non-elect can believe in Christ. It would certainly be presumption for the non-elect to believe that God was willing to save them; it would be equally so, for the *elect* to believe, without knowing that they were elected, and that Christ died for them. But how are they to know this? Their names are not specified in the Bible; and to believe without the Bible, would be to believe without authority; and to believe without authority, would be acting presumptuously.

Suppose, for example, twenty men were in a state of starvation, and I were to make provision for one-half of them, and send a message to inform them of it, without mentioning any names; would he be authorized to say to any one of this twenty, that *he was invited*. Surely not: nor could any

one of the twenty, upon hearing this message, believe that he was interested in the provision. But, if I provide for the whole number, and send a messenger to apprise them of it, he is then authorized to invite all, and every one of the twenty can believe that the provision is *for him*, without acting presumptuously. Therefore, if the Gospel, in all its parts, be not for all, but only for a part of the human family, can a preacher in truth say, that it is for any individual sinner? What would be more presumptuous, than for him to approach a sinner and inform him, that God had provided salvation for a part of Adam's race, and that he was one of that number. And it would be equally inconsistent for any sinner to conclude, that because God designs to save a part, therefore, he designs to save him. Thus, you see, that if Christ has not died *intentionally* for all men, no preacher has a right to invite any sinner to the Saviour; nor has any sinner a right to believe in him.

But the fallen family of Adam have a more sure word of prophecy, where unto they would do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. They have general and particular testimony, as well as negative and positive, that Christ died *intentionally* to save them all. It is considered a sound maxim in mathematics, that the whole is equal to all its parts, and that all the parts are equal to the whole. John informs us, that *Christ*

is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world; and Paul tells us, that he tasted death for EVERY man. Therefore, if the provision in the Gospel be for ALL, and EVERY individual, of the human family, then any and every sinner has authority to believe in Christ; and every minister of Jesus is at liberty, nay, it is his duty, to offer salvation to every sinner, and to urge him to accept of it. In doing so, he is in no danger of transcending his authority: "Go ye into all the world, and preach my Gospel to every creature." Every part of the great whole, can, and ought to believe; and he that believeth not, shall be damned.

ON EXPERIMENTAL RELIGION.

MAN is depraved in heart, and sinful in conduct, and, of course, is an enemy to God, both by nature and practice. In conversion, he becomes reconciled to the character, and conformed to the government of God. This change is wrought by divine agency, though not without the concurrence of man's agency. The sinner cannot be saved without God, and God will not save the sinner without his consent.

Regeneration constitutes one link of the beautiful chain in the Gospel plan of salvation.

1. God loved the world. 2. The world was elected, in Christ, to a day of grace. 3. Christ made an atonement for the world. 4. The Spirit reproves the world. 5. The operations of the Spirit prepare the way for conviction. 6. Conviction prepares the way for faith in Christ. 7. Faith in Christ prepares the way for justification. 8. Then follows adoption. 9. Then the spirit of adoption, or regeneration. 10. Next, sanctification, or a life of holiness. 11. And then follows glorification. This completes the *golden chain*. Thus, you see, God provides and proposes, and man believes and receives.

Sound theory lies at the bottom of experimental religion, but there is something to be felt in religion, as well as believed.

Many hold a correct system of doctrines, but, it is to be feared, they have never felt the power of those doctrines on their hearts; have never had the fallow ground of their hearts broken up by genuine conviction, or known what it is to pass from death unto life. It is not at all astonishing that such persons should feel opposition to heart-felt religion in others, and regard all excitement on the subject of religion, as mere delusion. But what is more rational, than for a sinner to be excited about the salvation of his soul? If this does not interest his feelings, surely, nothing can. God is holy: he is unholy. A holy God will punish an unholy sinner. He feels this to be true,

and, in view of his danger, cries out, like the publican, *God be merciful to me a sinner*; or, like blind Bartimeus, *Thou Son of David, have mercy on me*; or, like the jailor, *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*

Some are disposed to apologize for this disorder, as it would now be called, by saying, that the jailor was converted in a miraculous way, or alarmed by an earthquake, &c. But, upon reading the history, it will be seen, that the earthquake was over before he awoke. Nor did he then discover any symptoms of conviction, but believing the prisoners were gone, would have taken his own life, had he not been prevented by Paul. When the apostle spoke to him, the Spirit of God presented his sins in array before him, he fell down, and cried out, as thousands have done since, *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* and presently, we see him a converted man, rejoicing over his house. Thus, you see, the jailor was neither convicted nor converted by an earthquake, nor by any *miraculous power*, but by the operations of the Holy Ghost.

Then, let those who oppose religious excitements, beware, lest they be found fighting against the Spirit of God. I know that people may weep, and make a noise, without much feeling; yet it is repugnant to every law of our nature, for deep feeling to exist, without some external signs of it.

It is not for me to say, how long a sinner must be convicted, nor how loudly he must cry, before

he can obtain religion; but thus much I will say, he must be so sensible of his lost condition, that he will freely part with his sins for Christ. It is a matter of no moment with me, whether he fall down or stand up, be silent or cry aloud; he may do either, and not obtain salvation. This requires an unreserved surrender of the heart to Christ. But, as legal principles are interwoven in the very nature of man, he will not submit to be saved by another, until he has exhausted his own strength. And when he does all in his power, and entirely fails, upon the ground of his own merit—sees that it will not do to turn back to sin—feels the imminent danger of remaining where he is, and is so guilty and unworthy, that he is afraid to go forward—yet, this is the only alternative. He finds, if he wait to get a good heart before he goes to Christ, he never would go. Therefore, he casts his all upon the Saviour, or, in common language, gives up his heart to him, and rests alone on him for salvation, acknowledging that it would be just to damn him, though he is *not willing to be damned*. At that moment he is justified freely, and renewed in the spirit of his mind. And, although all are not alike sensible that *this is religion*, yet all are sensible of the change. One thing they know, that, *whereas, they were blind*, now they see. Yet, owing to their preconceived opinions about how religion would come, and how it would feel, and being disappointed in these

respects, it is not uncommon for those who are really born of God, to be afraid to recognize the change as being religion. They have obtained sight, but it is dim; *they only see men as trees walking*. This, however, is not the case with all. Some, at the moment of conversion, with an unflinching voice, claim the spirit of adoption, and cry out, *My Lord and my God*.

FAITH AND REGENERATION.

WE have often heard from the pulpit, and sometimes seen from the press, speculations with regard to the order in which Faith and Regeneration take place. Some suppose that Regeneration precedes Faith; others contend, that Faith takes place first. As it relates to the nature of them, it is not important which is first; for they are inseparably connected with each other: yet, it is evident, that one must take place before the other, and, to pervert their order, would not only present a distorted system, but involve error.

Faith is an act of our own minds, founded on testimony afforded by divine agency. If it be first, then salvation is suspended on the *choice of man*; but if Regeneration ("which is effected, as some say, by physical power, without the concurrence of man's agency,") precede Faith,

salvation is suspended on *divine agency*. If Faith be first, damnation is *suspended on unbelief*; but if Regeneration be first, then damnation is *suspended on God's unwillingness to change the heart*.

In order to render this subject plain, to the weakest capacity, I will present Faith and Regeneration as *two stakes*, and from them, run to their beginning corners, and then, to their respective ends. Let us suppose Regeneration to be first:—

Q. Are all regenerated?

A. No.

Q. Why are not all regenerated?

A. Because the Holy Ghost will not do it.

Q. Why will not the Holy Ghost regenerate all?

A. Because Christ never died *intentionally* to save all.

Now, let us return. The Holy Ghost only regenerates those for whom Christ died—*intentionally*. Only those who are regenerated, can believe; only those who believe, can be justified; only those who are justified, can be adopted; only those who are adopted, can be glorified.

I now suppose the following dialogue to take place between myself and a glorified saint:—

Q. Why are you thus glorified?

A. Because I was adopted.

Q. Why were you adopted?

A. Because I was justified.

Q. Why were you justified?

A. Because I believed.

Q. Why did you believe?

A. Because I was regenerated.

Q. Why were you regenerated?

A. The Spirit did it, without the concurrence of my agency.

Q. Why did the Spirit act thus?

A. Because Christ died, *intentionally*, to save me.

Q. Why did Christ die for you *intentionally*?

A. Because God loved me, and designed, from all eternity, to save me.

This may appear plausible, until we examine its counterpart. There are some sinners in hell, to whom I propose the following questions:—

Q. Why are you in hell?

A. Because we could not be glorified.

Q. Why could you not be glorified?

A. Because we were never adopted.

Q. Why were you not adopted?

A. Because we were not justified.

Q. Why were you not justified?

A. Because we did not believe.

Q. Why did you not believe?

A. Because we were not regenerated.

Q. Why were you not regenerated?

A. Because the Spirit would not do it.

Q. Why would not the Spirit change your hearts?

A. Because Christ never died for us, *intentionally*.

Q. Why did He not die for you, *intentionally*?

A. Because God never designed to save us.

So, you see, by placing Regeneration before Faith, that the *damnation*, as well as *salvation*, of every sinner, is hung on *divine agency*.

Now let us put Faith *before* Regeneration, and trace it to its origin, and see what will be the

result. First, Faith: thence to testimony, which is afforded, that the world may believe: thence to the Holy Spirit, who is come to *convince the world of sin, &c.*: thence to the death of Christ: thence to the love of God, which is the beginning corner of Faith. Let us now run back from the beginning corner, to the end. First, God loved the world; second, Christ died for the world; third, the Spirit strives with the world; fourth, the world may believe; fifth, those who believe, are justified; sixth, those who are justified, are adopted; seventh, those who are adopted, receive the Spirit of adoption, or, are regenerated; eighth, those who are regenerated, are sanctified; and, those who are sanctified, are also glorified.

With this order of things, let me inquire of a glorified saint:—

- Q. Why are you in heaven?
- A. Because I was sanctified.
- Q. Why were you sanctified?
- A. Because I was regenerated.
- Q. Why were you regenerated?
- A. Because I was adopted.
- Q. Why were you adopted?
- A. Because I was justified.
- Q. Why were you justified?
- A. Because I believed.
- Q. Why did you believe?
- A. Because I had testimony.
- Q. Where did you get testimony?
- A. From the Holy Spirit.

Q. Why did the Holy Spirit give you testimony?

A. Because Christ died for me.

Q. Why did Christ die for you?

A. Because God loved me.

Thus, you see, that Faith, before Regeneration, brings the same glory to God, that Regeneration, before Faith, does. In each case, the glorified saint ascribes all to divine agency. But it does more. It makes the damnation of the sinner turn upon his *own agency*. With Faith before Regeneration, I begin with a sinner in hell, and run back:—

Q. Why are you in hell?

A. Because I could not be glorified.

Q. Why could you not be glorified?

A. Because I was not sanctified.

Q. Why were you not sanctified?

A. Because I was not regenerated.

Q. Why were you not regenerated?

A. Because I was not adopted.

Q. Why were you not adopted?

A. Because I was not justified.

Q. Why were you not justified?

A. Because I did not believe.

Q. Why did you not believe?

A. Because I would not. Upon my own agency, my damnation turned.

These are some of the reasons why I choose to put Faith before Regeneration. And I know of no other plan, that will embrace the doctrine which seems to be so clearly taught in the Word of God, namely, that a sinner's damnation turns on his own agency.

CARDINAL POINTS.

THE best way to decide points more obscure, and less important, is, by the more clear and important ones. They are, generally, more clear, while the less important are obscure. Every system has agreement and government. Just so with the system of divinity. I find, in the creed of all orthodox Christians, the following sentiments, which I will set up, at present, as leading, or cardinal points, with which all our other sentiments will agree, if they be clear of error.

1st. There are some of Adam's family saved, and those who are saved, are saved by grace, and God receives all the glory.

2nd. There are some sinners damned, and they are damned for refusing grace, and the guilt lies at their own door.

Now, whatever may be the sentiments of Christians, in other respects, they all agree in these two points, whether they be Calvinists or Arminians. If I thought I believed one doctrine, which had a tendency to destroy either of these points, I would renounce it; and would not every Calvinist and Arminian do the same? If I know my heart, I most firmly believe, that some of Adam's family are saved; and those who are saved, are saved by grace, and God receives the glory; and that some

are damned, and that the fault is their own. No Calvinist can be more firm in the belief of salvation by grace, and no Arminian more settled in the belief of the guilt lying at the door of the sinner that is damned, than I am.

But, if our system only embrace one of the above points, there is error somewhere. Some think, if they can only save the sinner by grace, they secure all the glory to God; and it is not material how others are damned, whether by divine agency, or their own. But our system ought to operate *both ways*, and secure *both points*. If we maintain a sentiment in our system which appears to contribute to the glory of God; yet, if we hold another, that certainly tarnishes the divine glory, we lose more than we make—we destroy more glory than we gain.

I will now present you with two systems, which, though they embrace one of the above points, severally, yet neither of them embrace both.

There is one class of divines that hang everything on sovereign agency: the system is called predestination. This system considers everything that comes to pass, to have had a previous decree, and is effected by divine agency. The doctrine of particular and eternal election, limited atonement, and partial operations of the Spirit, is also connected with this system. It is contended, that the will of all who are saved, is determined by divine influence to choose life, and all the others were

either ordained to wrath, or left unprovided for. Let us now run the line of this system, to see whether it will embrace both those leading points, by which we are to be governed. Some are saved, and saved by grace, too, and God will receive all the glory of their salvation. But let us see whether the guilt of those who are damned, will lie at their own door. If everything turn on divine agency, without the concurrence of man's agency; and those who are saved, are saved by divine agency; we gain the first point. But the same agent that saves one, damns another; so, the other point is lost. Thus, you see, by hanging everything on divine agency, man ceases to be the cause of his own damnation, and so, the Calvinist loses more than he makes; for, if he brings some glory to God by the first act, he loses more by the second, than he gains by the first; therefore, there is error in his system somewhere.

A second system hangs everything on man's agency, and teaches that man, though fallen, is capable of finding his way back to heaven, without the aid of divine influence. By this scheme, you can lay the guilt of the sinner at his own door; but this only secures one point—the other is lost. Those who are damned, are the cause of their own damnation; but those who are saved, are saved by their own agency, and God is robbed of his glory: so it is evident, there is error in this system also.

Neither of the foregoing systems will secure those cardinal points, which we stated in our outset: therefore, those who hang everything, either on divine sovereignty, abstract from man's agency; or on man's agency, abstract from divine agency; are evidently in error, in some part of their plan.

I will now present you with a system, which, I think, will secure both the points in question; therefore, it must be true.

The government of God is composed of four different parts. In this government, some things take place on sovereign principles; others, by the influence of established laws; others, by man's agency; and others, again, by a concurrence of divine and human agency. The will is not determined by divine agency, as the Predestinarian supposes; nor by an over-balance of motive, as the Necessarian says; nor does man possess a *depraved self-determining* power to do good, as the Unitarian says: but, by the intervention of the Son of God, he is placed under divine influence, which counteracts his depravity, untrammels his will, and renders him capable of choosing life, as well as death; blessing, as well as cursing: and, in this situation, he possesses determining power—not a *depraved self-determining* power—but a determining power of the ability that God giveth. And as he is an agent in the government, he has ability to perform his part, and is held accountable

for what he can do, and ought to do. God will do his part in the government, but he will not do man's part;—man can, and must, do his own.

But some object to any thing turning on man's agency, and to his having ability to do any thing. Those, generally, who hang everything on divine agency, suspend the knowledge of God on his decrees, and say that God knows everything, because he has decreed everything; and those who hang everything on man's agency, generally say that God does not know everything, or, that he possesses the capacity of knowing everything, yet does not choose to exercise it. But, I would remark, that an intelligent being must know all he does, but it is not necessary that he should do all he knows; God must, and does know, all he does, but he does not do all he knows. His knowledge is infinite, and comprehends what he will do himself, and what every other being will do; yet, he is not the author of all he knows. He is, therefore, the proper judge of all the earth; *for known unto him are all things, and the judge of all the earth will do right.*

In order to embrace those leading points under consideration, all must have an election to a state of trial. Hence, all Adam's family were chosen in Christ, from the foundation of the world, that they might, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, be made holy, and become

personally the elect of God, and chosen, or set apart to a state of glory.

Therefore, as all were chosen, in Christ, to a state of trial, the atonement was made for all. All, then, have an election, and, founded on that election, is an atonement for all. Then, if the Father chose all, and the Son atoned for all, in order to have perfect unison in the office of the united THREE, all must come into this world under the office of the Holy Spirit, and a measure of his influence must be given to every man, as well as a general influence: he must convince the world, &c.

We will now run our lines from all these general points, to see whether we can secure those cardinal points for which we set out, and which we must embrace, in order to be correct. If only a part have an election, an atonement and divine influence, then, only a part can be saved. Although I will admit, that those who are saved, are saved by grace, and God receives the glory; yet, there is a part damned, and why? Because God did not design to save them; therefore, they could not be saved. Then, we have laid the damnation of those who are lost, at the door of divine agency; and so we have lost one of our leading points, designed to direct us in our system; and so it will be, if we hang everything on man's agency. The guilt of those who are lost, will lie at their own door; but, remember, some are saved, and God is robbed of the glory of their salvation, for they saved them-

selves. But, if we give all an election, all an atonement, and all SUFFICIENT *aid* by the Holy Spirit, then, any, and every sinner may, and can be saved. When a sinner may, and *can*, he ought to believe; and when he ought, and does, he has only done his duty; and when he has only done his duty, he has merited nothing; and if saved without his own merit, he is saved by grace; and if saved by grace, God receives all the glory; therefore, we have gained the first point, namely, that there are some saved, and saved by grace, and God receives all the glory.

But let us, in the next place, with this general plan, lay the guilt at the door of those who are damned.

All have an election, all have an atonement founded thereon; the Spirit convinces all: then, all sinners *may*, and *can*, be saved; and if they may, and can, they *ought*; and if they ought, and refuse, they ought to be damned; and if they be damned, the guilt will lie at their own door, and heaven will be clear. *What more could the Lord have done for them that he has not done?* So I have secured both points; my system operates both ways; and, of course, it must be true.

ON ELECTION.

IN the discussion of this subject, I propose, first, to consider the term; secondly, the application.

1st. As to the term: it is to be understood in a gracious sense, as you may see in Romans xi. 5, where it is called an election of grace. An election of grace is not to be understood to take, or choose one, and leave another; for there is no grace in leaving any one; but choosing one or many to obtain salvation, when they might have been left on the principles of justice.

To make a choice, which might not have been made, evinces sovereignty; to choose to save those, who might have been damned, evinces grace. In the case of man, God did choose to do what he might not have done, and, therefore, election is sovereign. But, he not only chose to do what he might not have done, but he chose to save those whom he might have damned; and, therefore, it is an election of grace, or a gracious election. An election that would leave any out, when all were exactly in the same situation, would be a sovereign *partial* election; for there would be no grace in those who were left out. Grace would only be displayed in saving the unworthy, and not in passing by a part of the unworthy.

Man must be considered as fallen, and, consequently, unworthy, when the decree of electing grace took place; and, as in view of the divine mind, all things are present, so, in the first instance, man is considered as chosen from the foundation of the world, or before the world began. See 2 Tim. i. 9.

As to the application of the term, it is first used in a general sense; secondly, in a personal sense: but both the general and personal must be understood in a *gracious sense*. All were chosen in Christ, when they might have been left.

They were chosen in Christ, who died for their offences; and they were chosen, that they might be holy. The election, in the first instance, was not to a state of glory, but a state of trial, that they might be holy, &c. See the text above quoted, with many others.

The election, in the first instance, gives all Adam's family an opportunity of salvation, and suspends that salvation on such a condition as excludes boasting, and completely saves the subject by grace, as you may see in Mark xvi. 15; Eph. ii. 8; Romans iv. 16.

Some say, that a part of the human family was chosen from eternity; others, think a certain character (the believer), was elected from eternity: but, as all are guilty and depraved, none could form the elect character, without a previous election; and, to leave out a part, leaves that part under fate.

All must have had an election, and when any believe, it becomes personal. In Christ, all have had an election. Predicated on that election, all are called by the Holy Spirit, as you may see in Prov. i. 23; "Turn ye at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you," &c. John xvi. 8; "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."

There is just one thing more to make it personal: "*Give diligence to make your calling and election sure,*" by yielding to the Spirit, who will lead you to Christ, and enable you to rest upon him for salvation; and then you will be "*elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ;*" 1 Peter i. 2. "*But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth;*" 2 Thess. ii. 13.

Every sinner *may* be saved by the death of Christ; for, by virtue of his death, all have an election in him; by the operations of the Holy Spirit, every sinner *can* be saved, because a measure of his influence is given to every man. But every sinner must believe for *himself*. The agency of man was first tested federally, but now, personally. When a sinner believes, then all the advantages of the first and general election

become his; and as only a part believe, so only a part are elected to a state of glory.

The first, and general election, was, from eternity, to a state of trial, that we might be holy; the second, and present election, which is personal, is to a state of glory. Those who are personally elected, are *justified* and *sanctified*, as you may see in the following scriptures:—

“Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself;” Psalm iv. 3. *“Paul, a servant of God, and an Apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect;”* Titus i. 1. *“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied;”* 2 Peter i. 2.

ON THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS.

HOLINESS of life, is a consequence of a change of heart. This is an essential doctrine of our holy religion, about which, we all agree. But whether the real Christian will persevere, and be eternally saved, is disputed. Some believe that he will; while others believe, that he may fall away, lose his religion, and obtain it again, become

sanctified, and yet lose it, and obtain it again. We believe, however, that a real Christian will not lose his religion, and finally fall into hell. But to be certain, let us reason together.

On this subject, one of two propositions must be true: either the Gospel secures to the believer complete safety, at some given period, or else he is eternally in danger of falling; and, if so, eternally the subject of fear, and, consequently, never the subject of real happiness. This idea is contrary to the Gospel, which secures to every believer complete and everlasting felicity. Therefore, the doctrine of apostacy cannot be true, and the doctrine of final perseverance must be true.

But at what period is the believer's happiness secured? Some say, at the hour of death. But if the Gospel cannot secure his happiness until death, then DEATH is the GREAT thing. *It* frees him from temptation, and makes his Heaven secure. But some have been secured some time before death. Job *knew* that he should see his Redeemer for himself; and Paul had finished his course. And many saints, in our day, have an assurance of Heaven, which they could not have, if they were in a state of uncertainty. It is true, that sometimes they have doubts (and who will not doubt, when he has a clear view of his own weakness, and, especially, if in addition to this, he views the Gospel as insufficient to secure him until death?) yet, every time they have a spiritual

view of the Gospel plan, they can say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day." Hence it appears, that salvation is made secure on this side of death; and, if so, what period is so scriptural, and reasonable, as the moment of conversion, when a sinner first believes in Christ, and is sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise?

But, it is said, that the doctrine of apostacy is the safest, and, therefore, must be true.

To which, I would reply, that many doctrines appear good in theory, which are not so in practice; and we ought to prove all doctrines by their practical influence. No doctrine can be true, whose practical influence is bad. Both doctrines have been long believed and preached. You can judge, as well as I, of their practical influence. The safest doctrine will present the fewest instances of falling, backsliding, &c. Are there fewer instances of falling, among those who preach and believe this doctrine, than among others? I think not. Why then advocate it with so much zeal, since it does not, nor cannot, produce any truly beneficial effects? I have long been of the opinion, that this doctrine was of no utility in the Church. But, we shall be asked, if there is not, in our country, as well as in different other countries, a large and respectable denomination, that have flourished under its

influence? They have flourished, it is true; but rather under the doctrines of repentance towards God, and faith in Jesus Christ, and other essential Gospel points connected with them.

Of what advantage to the pious, is the doctrine of apostacy? The advantage proposed by its advocates, is, that they may bring forth more of the fruit of evangelical obedience, and so live more to the glory of God. But this kind of obedience springs from one of two principles: either from that of love, or from slavish fear. It is not possible that any man, acquainted with religion and his Bible, will say, that it proceeds from the latter. And all that is now necessary, on this subject, is to determine whether the above doctrine does, or does not, induce a slavish fear. The matter is so evident, that it needs no further examination. What, but frequent alarms, unnecessary fears and doubts, must be the legitimate offspring of such a belief? Now, suppose that the dread of losing religion, and going to torment, should set a Christian to work, would He, who knows the heart, recognize such works as evangelical? I think not. Suppose you have two sons; one obeys you of choice, and from a free good will, and love of your character and government; the other, from a dread of the lash, and exclusion from you as an heir of your property; which renders you filial service, and which the service of a slave? And does not this father

know, that if this servile principle, which actuates the latter, should cease to exist, that all the obedience resulting from it, would come to a final close? Is this the "much fruit" by which God is glorified? Does he want slaves to grace his throne? Suppose the wicked knew that the Christian was actuated by this principle, would it be to them any great recommendation of the divine government? Might they not say, Ye are a set of slaves; Ye serve not your God from love: "Perfect love casteth out fear."

To conclude, then, upon this part of the subject, the matter stands thus: Evangelical obedience flows from love, and not from slavish fear. The doctrine of apostacy inspires this kind of fear; and, therefore, this doctrine does not promote evangelical obedience, and can be of no utility to the Christian.

If the standing of the Christian is infallibly secured, it is through the abounding goodness of God. And is it the nature of a Christian to sin against God, because he is good to him? If so, grace is no more grace; religion is no more religion. True, if he served God only from a principle of slavish fear, his standing being secured in this condition, he would, no doubt, take license to unbridle all his sensual appetites. But, if his heart is changed from nature to grace, and his obedience springs from a love of the divine precepts, where is the danger? The goodness of

God, exemplified in any and every shape, ought to have the very contrary effect, and certainly will, upon every true believer. But, may not the doctrine of perseverance, exert a dangerous influence upon those who are deceived? I answer, No. If they will examine themselves, and for themselves, they may come to the truth. But, even admitting that it might, would it be as dangerous, in this respect, as the doctrine of apostacy? The half-hearted are very apt to disgrace their profession, and, in times of trial, to fall away entirely. In such cases, the doctrine of perseverance, presumes they never had religion; and if these persons should again think of getting to heaven, they must seek a religion different from what they had before: whereas, apostacy admits they had it, but have lost it, and only exhorts them to seek the same they had before. I ask again, which is the most dangerous sentiment? The answer is unavoidable. And whatever effect the doctrine of final perseverance may have upon the half-hearted, or the hypocrite, I am sure it will tend to gratitude, love, humility, in all true believers, who are under its influence. I have heard, that some have said, "If they knew they were certain of heaven, they would do as they please—cheat, defraud," &c. Then, I suppose, they do not *now do* as they *please*!! A fine compliment, indeed, to their sincerity. But for the dread of apostatizing, or rather, its conse-

quences, away might go the service of God, for them! But, perhaps, these persons do not speak as they feel; nor do I, by any means, design this to have a general application. I have no doubt, there are thousands among those who oppose the doctrine of final perseverance, who would live as holy as they do, and perhaps more so, under its influence. But, once for all, if this sentiment encourage wickedness in Christians, there are a great number of positive assertions in the Bible, which encourage wickedness, as they directly, and unequivocally, support this sentiment, which we shall presently see.

But, it is said, that man is a free agent, and the doctrine of perseverance destroys his free agency, and, therefore, cannot be true.

To this, I would reply, that if the doctrine of perseverance destroys man's agency in this life, the doctrine of being confirmed in a state of glory, destroys it also. And, as we have seen, if we are never confirmed, we are never free from fear, and "fear hath torment." Consequently, we are never happy. The idea, therefore, that the doctrine of perseverance destroys free agency, is unscriptural, and unreasonable; for the only objection that can be made to the confirming of a free agent, amounts to this, that it cannot be done without trial; but all agree that a free agent can be confirmed, consistently with his agency, after having passed through a state of trial. Is it not

true, that the whole human family have a state of trial? Now, for what purpose is it? Why, that they may be confirmed in a state of holiness and happiness for ever.

Was not the Christian an agent, and was not his agency consulted, when his standing in Christ was secured? Had this been done without his consent, or against his will, then, indeed, his agency would have been destroyed. But, if his will, and the will of God concurred in this matter, wherein is his agency disturbed? Not at all. Does not the individual, who comes to Christ, choose him and his service, and the enjoyment of God, not only for time, but for eternity? If this be true, would he not be disappointed, should the Divine Being not secure these things unto him? I grant, indeed, if he chose religion for a limited time, or so long as it might suit his temporal convenience, or until he might take another notion, then, to impose religion, and in this condition to confirm him, would be trampling upon his agency. But, whoever embraced religion under such conditions, either expressed or implied, or lodged, unperceived by us, in the deepest and darkest folds of corrupt nature? God is not to be deceived; nor would he commit to such hands, and such hypocrisy, the *pearl of great price*. No: we must be sincere. We receive Christ under no such condition. We choose him and his service for time and for eternity; and this is done freely,

without any compulsion; and, in this choice, this free, voluntary act of the mind, is our agency for life, and for an eternity in heaven, confirmed and established. Suppose, now, that in the hour of conversion, the above choice is in substance made, (and none dare deny it), and upon this, God secures our standing, and seals us unto the day of redemption; may we not, at any period, look back, and say, this is no more than what we freely chose in the moment of our deliverance? Nay, the saint of God may adopt the same language eternally in glory. Thus, I believe, that neither the doctrine of perseverance, nor a glorified state, is at all inconsistent with free agency; God's securing the eternal salvation of the agent containing, substantially, nothing more than what he freely chose.

If the new nature of holiness existed only in exercise, the subject might lose it. For, although it is impossible, for those who are born of God, to commit the sin unto death, yet, through inadvertence, or strong temptation, they may relax their religious efforts, and even be guilty of improprieties. The new nature, however, is a fixed principle of the heart, producing holy exercise—one is the cause, the other is the effect. And I would here ask, does the cause sustain the effect, or the effect the cause? All will agree, that the latter is sustained by the former. Then it is improper to say, I shall keep my religion

if I remain faithful. Holy principles are neither produced nor preserved by practice. They are impressed upon the heart by the moral image of God, and preserved by the agency of the Spirit, through faith in Jesus Christ. I say, they are impressed upon the heart by the moral image of God, and not by physical power, as some have supposed, and that, too, without any moral light. When you wish to make an impression, you first set your type, and then bring it in contact with the object designed to receive the impression. The figure, when made, will correspond with the type by which it was made. Although God is a sovereign, he chooses to make a moral impression on the heart of man, by causing his moral excellence to shine upon it, through the face of Jesus.

Once more: I would argue, that the doctrine of final perseverance, in connection with a salvation free for all, is more consistent than any other. They both completely accord with every Christian's experience. I would ask, was there ever a soul converted, that did not view a fulness in Christ, for all men? And does not the reflection, that a part of the human family is excluded from any possibility of salvation, tend to diminish the happiness of the Christian? I would ask, again, when the soul is happy in the Lord, is that happiness increased by the thought, that it may yet lose its religion, and go to hell? I think

not. Therefore, I conclude, that neither of these doctrines is taught in the Bible. If Christians were more particular in maintaining doctrines that would accord with their own experience, they would not be so often driven to the extremes of either Calvinism or Arminianism, and would better enjoy their God and brethren.

It is asked, is not the Christian in a state of trial while in this world; I answer, yes; but his trial differs very widely from that of a sinner. The trial of a sinner is designed to afford him an opportunity of applying to Christ for the pardon of his sin, and a freedom from condemnation. But the Christian has received these things; therefore, his trial is not intended to prove whether he will, but whether he has come to Christ; and to prove, by his conduct, that there is a reality in religion, which religion shines brighter and brighter the more it is tried.

The conclusion seems to be this: When the profession is genuine, the trial will be sustained; but, where there is a deception, it will be made manifest.

The Christian's stay on earth, after conversion, is intended to answer several important purposes. 1. That he may be useful to others; 2. That he may enhance his own reward by his work of faith and labor of love; 3. That his Christian graces may be fairly tested, which, as I before remarked, never fail to shine brighter and brighter in pro-

portion to the trials through which he is called to pass.

Some object to the doctrine under consideration, because it is connected, as they think, with eternal and unconditional election. They suppose there is no intermediate ground between Calvinism and Arminianism. This, I have often heard expressed, and, sometimes, by those who knew but little of the sentiments of either Calvin or Arminius. I would, by no means, disparage either of these men. They were, no doubt, both orthodox in some points, but in others they were not. This, I presume, will be admitted by all. The Arminians, surely, will not contend, that Arminius understood and taught correctly, all that is in the Bible. On the other hand, it is equally certain that Calvin did not reach the standard of perfection in every doctrinal point which he inculcated. This would preclude the idea of any improvement in theological knowledge, since the days of these two divines, and compel us to embrace either one or the other of their systems, without even investigation. I, however, crave the liberty of dissenting from either, or both of these great and, I hope, good men, where they have departed from the word of God. While I believe with Calvin in the final perseverance of the saints, I contend that this doctrine is not inseparably connected with eternal election. It is predicated on an appointment which takes place in time,

not on one that has existed from all eternity. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God," says Paul, "whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption;" Eph. iv. 30. When does this sealing take place? Hear the same Apostle: "After that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." Sealing has a variety of applications, but, here, we apprehend, it means to confirm. After believing, then we are confirmed, "unto the day of redemption," and receive an earnest of our future inheritance. Thus, you see, that the perseverance of the saints has no connection whatever with eternal election. It might as well be contended, that prayer, or any other Christian duty, was connected with eternal election; for the perseverance of the saints is nothing more than obedience, emanating from holy principles implanted in the heart in conversion.

Those who hold the doctrine of final apostacy, would think it very unfair, were I to charge them with believing the absurdities taught by the Papists, Socinians, and Pelagians, simply because they embrace one of their tenets, viz., falling from grace. Is it not equally unfair for Cumberland Presbyterians to be charged with holding the doctrine of eternal and unconditional election, merely because they have published, in their Confession of Faith, some of the tenets held by Calvin?

But, it is said, if angels in heaven, and Adam in paradise fell, then, why may not Christians fall?

I answer, there is no analogy between the standing of Christians and that of angels and Adam. The latter possessed holy natures, and yet angels fell without being tempted by any agent whatever, and Adam yielded to the first temptation. Christians possess neither the holiness of Angels nor of Adam, yet all will agree that they withstand many temptations. Therefore, they stand upon a different foundation to that of angels, or of Adam in his primitive state. Then, nothing can be inferred from the fall of either, in favor of the fall of a believer in Christ. He has Christ in him, formed in him, has his spirit, his nature, his life.

But, say some, if the real Christian cannot fall, what are we to do with several passages of scripture, a number of characters and figures, that seem to hold forth the possibility of losing religion; I answer, that, upon examination, I think it will be found, that these afford no arguments in favor of the doctrine of falling from grace. I only have time, at present, however, to give them a passing notice.

The 18th chapter of Ezekiel, will, first, claim my attention. It is thought by many, that it contains incontrovertible argument in favor of the doctrine against which I am now contending. That the reader may have a correct understanding of the true meaning of this chapter, it will be necessary for him to recollect that the

Jews, in the days of the prophet Ezekiel, were in a very depraved condition—guilty of many atrocious crimes, for which he was sent to reprove them, and to warn them of their approaching captivity, and to urge a speedy reformation, as the only means of escape. They would, sometimes, flatter themselves, that, even if the prophet's message were true, yet the calamities which he threatened, were so far distant, that they would be dead and gone, before they would come. Their common proverb was, *the days are prolonged and every vision faileth*. In the chapter under consideration, they seemed to have viewed their danger as being near at hand, but attached all blame to their ancestors, saying, *The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and have, thereby, set the children's teeth on edge*; that is, their fathers had sinned, which was about to subject them (the children) to a state of bondage to the Chaldeans. They even dared to impeach the equity of God, saying, *His ways are not equal*. This led Ezekiel to a vindication of the divine character, from which is inferred the doctrine of falling from grace.

The prophet supposes two opposite characters—one turning from righteousness, (verse 26) the other from wickedness, (verse 27) both of whom receive at the divine hand according to their actions: one *dies*, the other *lives*. Now, it is evident, that by this righteous man, the prophet

intended to represent a former state of the Jews, when they were not guilty of the crimes with which they then stood charged, and that, by departing from that state, they became opposed to the calamities which were then hastening to overtake them. I ask, *was that a converted state*, and had they all fallen from grace? It would be difficult to prove this. How many nations, besides the Jews, have brought upon themselves temporal calamities by departing from right or *righteous* actions, and indulging in certain crimes. Are we not now trembling for our *own nation*, in consequence of the crimes of Sabbath breaking and intemperance, and is not the warning voice of the watchman heard at every point? Yet no one attributes this danger to the apostacy of true believers. And, whatever difficulty there may be in understanding the prophet in the chapter before us, it is obvious that he did not mean, by the righteous man turning from righteousness, to inculcate the doctrine of a true saint of God losing his religion and going to hell. His whole scope and design warrant the belief, that he intended the Jews to understand a strict analogy between themselves and the individual to whom he referred. But it is contended, that this righteous man must have been converted; because, it is added, in the next verse, *when a wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, &c., he shall save his soul alive.* The prophet, it will be observed was still

defending the equity of God in the impending calamities of the Jews. He had just shown them, by the similitude of an individual, how they became involved; and now, by the reformation of a wicked man, he points out the means of their escape.

And what were those means? I answer, not conversion. This, to be sure, was necessary in order to escape eternal death; but, as I have already intimated, he was, in this place, referring to temporal calamities; and, as the means of deliverance, he urges the Jews to depart from their *idolatry, whoredom, violence, oppression, &c.* If they would forsake these abominations, he gave them to understand, they should not fall into the hands of their enemies; as our preachers now tell us, that our independence can only be perpetuated by suppressing those national vices, which are every where perpetrated. If this view of the subject be correct, in order to keep up the analogy, we are to understand nothing more, in the case of the wicked man, than an external reformation. But, says one, it is said *he shall save his soul alive, &c.* True, he shall be delivered from the captivity, or *saved* from those temporal judgments connected therewith. *Life and death*, in the scripture, according to the prophetic way of speaking, often signify external dispensations of divine providence. Deut. xxx. 15, 19, 20. Jer. xxi. 8.

If it be contended, that the prophet referred to eternal death, when he signified that the Jews had become involved by *personal sin*, (v. 20.) I know not how Paul's divinity and his can be reconciled; for Paul says, *by the disobedience of one* (Adam,) *many were made sinners*; Rom. v. 19. Here, indeed, the children's teeth *are set on edge* by the sin of the first Father And, upon the supposition that Ezekiel referred to eternal life in the case of a *wicked man's turning*, &c. he would contradict another sentiment of the Apostle, which is, *by the obedience of one*, (Christ,) *shall many be made righteous*.

Both in the fall and restoration of man, the Apostle embraces, most clearly, the principle of representation, which seems not to be embraced in the chapter under consideration. It is evident, therefore, that the prophet must have included in the *wicked man's turning*, &c. something less than saving grace, and a right to eternal life. Of course, this chapter affords no testimony that a true believer may fall from grace, and be eternally lost.

The 15th chapter of John is likewise often introduced to prove falling from grace. It contains a part of what may be called a farewell discourse, delivered by Christ to his Apostles, just after he had administered to them the memorials of his death, and announced his approaching departure. In this parting address, he in

formed them, that *the hour was coming, when they should be scattered every man to his own, and that he would be left alone*, (alluding to his Crucifixion,) and that they would be tempted not only to return to their own friends in Jerusalem, but even to shrink from their Apostleship, and go back to their different occupations. In view of this solemn period, he made several precautionary suggestions, (verses 2—6.) But it is evident, from a preceding part of this valedictory, that our Saviour did not intend, in these remarks, to awaken in the minds of his Apostles a fear of going to hell; for he had previously told them, that, *because he lived they should also live*. (John xiv. 19.) Nay, more—he assured them that such was the *stability* of the union that existed between him and them, that it would bear a comparison to that which he sustained to his Father. (v. 20.) Then, as there is no contradiction in the infallible word of Christ, he must not be understood, in the cautions to which I have referred, as inculcating the doctrine of final apostacy. Let our Saviour be his own expositor in this case. *“These things have I spoken that my joy might remain, and that your joy might be full.”* (v. 11.) That is, I have apprised you of your trials before they happen, and of your entire dependence on me for strength, to enable you to bear them; that you may not yield to fear, or be

frustrated when they arrive. Should you shrink from your steadfastness, on that occasion, you will incur my displeasure, as well as diminish your own happiness. Christ did not say, These things have I spoken that you might not lose your religion and go to hell.

But we are asked, in almost every sermon preached on the doctrine of apostacy, (and, by the by, they are not few,) why caution where there is no danger? In reply, I would ask, why pray for things which would be certainly received without prayer? Reader, do not startle at this inquiry; that same divine personage did this, who delivered the cautions to his Apostles, from which the doctrine of falling from grace is inferred. "*Father, glorify me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*" (John xvii. 5.) Did not Jesus *know all things*? *Yea, the deep things of God*? Then, why pray for that which he knew would take place? I was once asked by a preacher of some celebrity, "*Why I prayed?*" If, said he, your doctrine be true, you will be certain to get to heaven. I cited him to the passage just quoted, which evidently confounded him, and he begged time for reflection, before he would give an answer. Now, the glorification of every true believer is made just as certain, by the promises of Christ, as his was by the promise of the Father, "*Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh*

my blood hath ETERNAL life, and I will raise him up at the last day;" John vi. 51. "*Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*" Col. iii. 3, 4. "*I will come again and receive you, that where I am, there ye may be also;*" John xiv. 3. By these promises, a state of glory is made certain to every believer; yet it is their duty to pray, and it is as consistent for them to do so, as it was for Christ. Then, if prayer be consistent with a state of assurance, caution is equally so with a state of safety.

To make this subject more plain to the reader, I will instance Paul's voyage to Italy, in the course of which the ship's company became much alarmed by reason of a violent storm. At length the Apostle informed them, that not one of them should be lost. Acts xxvii. 22, 23, 24. This prediction was founded on a divine determination to deliver them which had been revealed to Paul, by an Angel of God. But, notwithstanding this decree of heaven, the Apostle at one time gave a very serious caution: "*Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved;* v. 31.

Now, compare this case with the cautions given by Christ to his Apostles, after he had appointed them to a state of glory. "*And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath*

appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel;" Luke xxii. 29, 30. Here is a state of security as unequivocally fixed as an appointment of heaven can make it; yet the following cautionary language is addressed to the Apostles, the subjects of this appointment: "*If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire, &c.;*" John xv. 6. Now, there is no more danger to be inferred from this caution than from the one given by Paul to the shipmen.

Then, if prayer, as we have seen, be consistent with a state of assurance, and caution with an appointment for heaven, nothing can be inferred from the cautionary language of the Bible in favor of apostacy.

Another passage relied on, to prove the doctrine of apostacy, is found in Heb. x. 26. "*If we sin wilfully after that we have received a knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin.*"

Two things are necessary in order to a correct understanding of the Apostle's meaning in this text. First, to know the persons he addressed, and secondly, the object of that address. With regard to the first, there can be no difficulty. It is evident that he addressed the Jews collectively, and it is equally clear

that his object was to convince them of the great advantages of the gospel over those of the ceremonial law, and to correct the errors of those who had embraced the Christian system, but still retained a predilection for the Jewish forms and ceremonies. In the passages just referred to, he seems to aim not only at purging out this old leaven from the true believer, but to prevent even such as had, from the external evidences of the gospel, (perhaps inward convictions too,) embraced it as true from renouncing it under persecution, and returning to the religion of the Jews. Every body knows, that simply to assent to, or receive the truth, does not constitute a true Christian. (See the stony-ground hearers, in Matt. xiii. 20.) It is also evident the Apostle could not have meant that every voluntary neglect of duty or commission of sin, (for I know of no sin without volition,) sealed the damnation of the Christian. This would have contradicted the doctrine of John, where he says, "*If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father;*" 1 John ii. 1. But Paul's whole scope and design clearly warrant the belief, that he spoke with reference to the particular crime of renouncing the gospel dispensation, and returning to the ceremonial law. In all such apostacies, damnation would be inevitable; for there was no other sacrifice for sin, besides that which the gospel revealed

Therefore, it was important for them not to cast away their confidence in the truth of the gospel, (v. 35.) though they might not as yet have experienced its saving benefits.

The Apostle had the same object in view in verses 28, 29. "*If he that despised Moses' law, died without mercy, (Deut. xvii. 2.) how shall he escape who tramples under his feet the Son of God, and regards the blood of the covenant wherewith he (the Son of God,) was sanctified,*" or consecrated as the Saviour of the world, "*an unholy thing.*" The fact that the Apostle himself had not attained unto sanctification, (Phil. iii 12.) and that he had, in a previous part of this epistle, reproved the Jews for their low attainments in religion, together with the collocation of the words of this passage, proves that he had no reference to the sanctification or personal holiness of those to whom he wrote. Then, as receiving the truth does not necessarily imply real religion, as sinning wilfully after receiving it, refers primarily to the Jews returning to their old religion, and as sanctification, in the passage before us, relates to the manner in which Christ became the Saviour of mankind, I see nothing in this chapter to prove that a true believer may lose his religion and go to hell.

But it is said, "*If any man draw back, &c.*" v. 38. Does not this prove falling from grace?

I answer, no. There is a wide difference in supposing a thing, and in proving the reality of the thing supposed. Paul supposed, that if even an Angel from heaven should preach any other gospel, he ought to "*be accursed*;" but this does not prove that an Angel ever had, or ever would preach in any way. True, if a genuine Christian should draw back, so as to lose his religion, he would inevitably perish; but this supposition does not prove that such an event ever has, or ever will take place. But suppose I admit that a just man may draw back, still there is a great difference between backsliding and drawing back "*to perdition*." This the Apostle carefully guards, by saying, "*We are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul*." v. 39.

But it is asked, if a Christian may backslide, why can he not fall from grace. Let God himself answer this inquiry. "*I will be his father, and he shall be my son: if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men. But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee*." 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15.

Again, it is asked, where is a man's religion when he is backsliding; I would reply, by asking, where is a man's reason when he commits

an unreasonable act? Is he not still a rational being? And surely it will not be contended, that a man ceases to be a Christian so soon as he departs in thought, word, or action, from the requirements of our holy religion. This would involve sinless perfection, to which none, except a few fanatics, make pretensions. But, says one, what would become of a Christian, were he to die in a backsliding state. Before I answer this inquiry, reader, permit me to ask you one or two questions. Do you believe you have religion? Are you as happy now as you have been? If you are not, then, you are a backslider. Sin has separated between you and your God. Now, what would become of you, were you this moment to die? God would reclaim you. So, I say, concerning every genuine Christian.

Again, it is thought, that chapter vi. 4, of this same epistle, inculcates the doctrine against which I am now contending: "For it is impossible for those, who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

Now, it is scarcely necessary for me to introduce an argument, to prove, that the Apostle had

no allusion here, to a truly converted man: he himself, has determined this matter, (v. 8.) by the similitude of the earth bringing forth nothing but briers and thorns, after being dressed, receiving rain from heaven, &c. I have often been astonished that persons, with this explanation before them, would rely for a moment on these texts to prove the doctrine of apostacy; for the earth referred to by the apostle, as a fit emblem of the character that he had just described, never yielded any fruit; therefore, could not represent genuine Christians. They are represented by the soil that brings forth *good fruit*; Matt. xiii. 23.

But, if the passages under consideration, prove the possibility of losing religion, they also prove the impossibility of getting it again. (v. 6.) And, indeed, upon the supposition of apostacy being true, it would seem to me, every way reasonable to suppose, that the apostate never could be restored; for it is admitted on all hands, that sinners, *before conversion*, by rejecting light and abusing privileges, may lose their day of grace. But, I ask, can a sinner, under any circumstances, reject as much light, and abuse as many privileges, as the Christian would do, were he to throw away his religion? Surely not. Then, if a Christian were to fall, his damnation would be inevitable. Some, to avoid this difficulty, have applied the Scriptures in

question, only to those who are sanctified “If they shall fall away, it would be impossible to renew them again unto repentance.” Poor encouragement this, indeed, to seek sanctification as it is taught by those who hold the doctrine of falling from grace! They admit, I presume, that regenerated people go to heaven when they die, though they never obtained sanctification until their dying hour. Then, would it not be more safe to possess low attainments in religion, than to become sanctified, and still be liable to fall—and, what is worse, have no prospect of rising again.

But this application of the Apostle’s language, seems to me, to be entirely without foundation. Indeed, I think, it will appear, upon a minute examination, that he was so far from speaking of those who were sanctified, that his description falls very far short of true Christians.

“They were once enlightened.” Are not all men enlightened? “They had tasted the heavenly gift, and been made partakers of the Holy Ghost,” that is, they had received of the Holy Ghost, power to work miracles, which was called a heavenly gift. It is evident, that, in the days of the Apostles, such power was, in some instances, unaccompanied with saving grace. “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, &c. And then will I

profess unto them, I never knew you ;” Matt. vii. 22. Origen and others afford corroborating testimony, that devils were cast out among the Jews, by those who were strangers to true piety. But, should this explanation be rejected, I will insist that a sinner may receive a heavenly gift, consisting of divine influence, and partake of the Holy Ghost, as the Spirit of conviction—as the spirit of bondage unto fear—Rom. viii. 15—and yet have no religion. Again, they tasted the good word of God ; so did Herod—Mark vi. 20—so did the stony ground hearers : “ *But he that received the seed, into stony places, the same is he that heareth THE WORD, and anon with joy receiveth it ; yet hath he not ROOT in himself, but endureth for a while ; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth, because of the word, by and by he is offended.*” Matt. xiii. 20, 21. Here the word is received, and of course *tasted* ; but who would say that this character ever obtained religion ? I pass to the last characteristic. They tasted the powers of the world to come. This referred to the Christian dispensation, under which many have felt powerful impressions, but have stopped short of true conversion. The meaning, however, will not be altered, if we suppose the Apostle to allude to an invisible state. The soul tastes by feeling ; and who does not know, that sinners feel the reality of heaven and hell, and may make some efforts to escape the one, as well as indulge

pleasing anticipations of the other, and yet remain strangers to genuine religion? Acts xxiv. 25; xxvi. 28. Matt. xxv. 1, 12.

With regard to the characters so often introduced to prove falling from grace, the limits of my pamphlet will, at present, restrict me to very few remarks, and I will confine them entirely to the case of Judas; in which, it is thought, we have incontrovertible evidence of total and final apostacy. It will, however, be necessary, before this can be admitted, to prove that Judas was ever truly converted; for this has never yet been done to my satisfaction.

The first argument in favor of the piety of Judas, is drawn from the following Scripture: "*Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted his heel against me.*" Ps. xli. 9. This passage seems to be applied to Judas by our Saviour. John xiii. 18. *Mine own familiar friend.* Surely, says one, Judas could not have been a friend without being a Christian. I ask, was he still a Christian after he had joined the wicked mob to betray Christ? Well, after he had done this, Jesus called him friend. "*And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come,*" &c. Matt. xxvi. 50. But it is urged, the Saviour trusted in Judas. Whatever may be the meaning of this expression, I think, it cannot be pretended that Christ ever regarded him as a loyal subject; for it is expressly said,

that *he knew he would betray him*, (John xiii. 11,) and that he knew it from the beginning. John vi. 64. The truth is, we are to understand nothing more in the passage quoted from Psalms, than expressions corresponding with the *profession* of Judas—not that Christ ever regarded him as his true friend, or trusted in him, according to the true meaning of the term.

The second evidence introduced to prove that Judas was a Christian, is, that he wrought miracles. To this I would reply, that it has already been shown, that a power to work miracles was something separate and distinct from real religion. Balaam possessed miraculous knowledge; that is, a spirit of prophecy; (Num. xxiv. 2–17,) yet, I presume, no body believes he was a good man. Now, what is the difference between miraculous knowledge and miraculous power? Both come from God, and have been possessed by unconverted men. Then, a power to work miracles affords no evidence that Judas was a true Christian.

But it is said, Judas was given to Christ. True; but in what sense? Surely not as a true believer. I request the reader to examine the history of this case minutely. “*Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the High Priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you.*” Matt. xxvi. 14, 15. Observe, this was before the Sacrament. If Judas fell from grace, it must have been previous

to the administration of this ordinance. Now turn to what Christ said after the communion, in his sacerdotal prayer, of those that had been given unto him. "*Thou givest them me, and they have kept thy word.*" John xvii. 6. The reader will discover, that Christ, in verses 6, 7, and 8, is speaking of the conversion of his Apostles, where Judas is not included; for he had previously sold his Lord and renounced his word; therefore, what is said in these verses, could not have been true concerning Judas. Hence, he had not been given to Christ, *in conversion*, as had been the other Apostles. But in verse 12, Christ alludes to his Apostles, as having been given to him in another sense, in which Judas is included; viz., as external disciples.

But, says one, Judas was chosen by Christ. Yes, I answer, chosen as a student, but not unto eternal life. "*I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen.*" John xiii. 18, In this choice, Judas is not included.

Again, it is said, Judas was sent to preach, and the inquiry is frequently made with an air of triumph, would Christ send an unconverted man to preach the Gospel? It is true, Judas was suffered to remain with the Apostles, though he had not received the word from the lips of Christ, as they had done. John xvii. 6-8. Our Saviour did not see proper to execute the discipline of the Church on him, as God, knowing the hearts of

men. While on earth, he chose to act in conformity to his government of the Church in after ages. And, doubtless, there have been, and are now, but too many Judases in the Church. But, is she less under the government of Christ now, than she was then.

But it is still urged, that, if I believe Judas had no religion, I am under the necessity of believing, also, that Christ calls and sends forth unconverted men to preach the Gospel. I would just reply, that those who believe Judas *had* religion, and *lost* it, are involved in a similar difficulty; viz., that it is the will of Christ, that men should retain the ministerial office after their apostacy; for he did not depose Judas, but suffered him to remain with the Apostles, and even administered the sacrament to him, after he had covenanted with the Priests to destroy him.

But, if I had no other proof, that Judas was, from the beginning, an irreligious man, the following would be sufficient. "*Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you IS A DEVIL,*" (John vi. 70,) a fallen spirit. This was before Satan entered into Judas to betray Christ. Luke xxii. 3. John xiii. 2. He was also called a thief prior to this time. John xii. 6. These, I think, are bad marks of Christianity.

The figures which seem to favor the doctrine of falling from grace, such as *twice dead*, to my mind, refer to the almost Christian: to those

characters, who, after having died in Adam, were placed under the quickening influence of the Spirit, but rejected the light until it departed ; after which they were no more quickened. Perhaps there is no metaphor better calculated to represent this deplorable situation of the sinner, than a tree, not only dead, but plucked up by the roots; from which we may learn, that there was no possibility of its ever being revived.

Again : the sow, after she was washed, returned to her wallowing in the mire. All that I have to say on this subject, is, had her nature been changed, and rendered innocent and clean, she, no doubt, would have pursued a different course ; and, had the character designed to be represented by this figure, been changed in heart, *he would have remained with us*. But for the want of a new nature, it has *happened unto him like the sow that was washed, &c.* *He went out from us, that it might be manifest that he was not of us. Had he been of us, he no doubt would have continued with us.*

I will now conclude, by noticing a few passages of Scripture in favor of final perseverance : some have already been brought to view, which it will not be necessary here to repeat.

“ Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.” 1 John iii. 9. We are not to understand sinless perfection here.

This would contradict other parts of the word of God. Chapter i. 8-10 The Apostle gives his meaning in chapter v. 16, where he speaks of the *sin unto death*, and this is the sin which those who are born of God cannot commit; therefore, they shall never die.

“For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Rom. viii. 38, 39.

Observe the manner in which this triumphant language is introduced. “I am persuaded.” By whom was Paul persuaded? Surely not by the Devil, but by the Spirit of God. Then he was not deceived when he made this daring challenge to the enemies of the true believer. Life is desirable, and death is terrible; but neither the one nor the other shall be able to separate us from the love of God. “*Nor angels, principalities, nor powers.*” Good angels will not, for they are the friends of the Christian; bad angels cannot, for, although they are enemies, *they are restrained enemies.* “*Nor principalities, nor powers;*” that is, the powers of civil authority. A Nero may rage, and others may vent their spite, but all combined shall not be able to effect a separation between Christ and the Christian. “*Nor things present, nor things to come.*” I have often heard attempts

made to evade the force of this passage, by saying, that nothing but sin could effect a Christian's fall; but surely the Apostle includes this in *things present*. *Nor heights, nor depths, nor any other creature*; that is, neither prosperity nor adversity, nor any thing that can be named or thought of. If the Apostle did not believe in the impossibility of losing religion, when he uttered this language, surely words have no meaning.

“And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.” Jer. xxxii. 40. It is supposed by some, that this promise only extended to Israel according to the flesh; but inasmuch as there seem to be spiritual blessings couched in it, I think it also belongs to *Israelites indeed*, and that every true Christian may claim the benefit of it. In this promise, God pledges himself never to leave nor forsake his people. Oh, but, says one, that is not what we are in danger of. The great danger lies in us forsaking God. But the promise under consideration provides against this also. *I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me*. God knows if his people be left to themselves, they will depart from him; but he has determined not to do this.

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal

life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands. My Father, who gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands." John x. 27, 28, 29. What language could be stronger? From it we learn that Christians now have eternal life: *not temporary life*, which would be the case, were they to fall from grace. This, however, they cannot do; for he who is greater than all, has them in his hand, and none is able to pluck them *out of his hand*.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and *shall not* come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." John v. 24. Here the present state of the believer is first brought to view. He has endless life begun in his soul. It is, then, most clearly shown, that this life will never be forfeited, for he *SHALL NOT come into condemnation*.

The above quotations are but a brief specimen of what the word of God says concerning the security of the saints. It would be needless to multiply.

The reader will plainly discover, that the passages we have recited are direct in their application, and too positive in their declarations to admit of doubt, with regard to their true meaning. This, I think, is not the character of those introduced to prove final apostacy

Their application is doubtful. Indeed, I never saw the first positive text of Scripture to prove this doctrine.

ON FREE MORAL AGENCY.

A FRIEND requests, that I should say something about moral free agency—the true distinction between free agency and moral agency. I know not that I can say any thing satisfactory on that vexed question, which has employed the best pens for ages past ; but, if I cannot satisfy others, I ought to understand myself, what I mean by free moral agency. By a free agent, I understand one that acts without restraint or necessity. A moral agent, is one that is held responsible for his conduct. Man acts freely, without restraint or necessity ; and is accountable for his actions : therefore, man is a free moral agent. We are now considering man in a state of trial ; in which state he has power to act or do what he will not have power to do, when the advantages of probation are removed from him. Removed from these advantages, he may sin freely, or do what he is inclined to do ; but he will sin necessarily, having nothing to counteract his depraved nature. He can do nothing else but sin ; but he will be a

moral agent, if he can sin. He has moral ability, for sin is an act of a moral agent; and having, by the abuse of his blessings, turned them into curses, he is responsible for his after conduct. But, as we are speaking of a subject in a state of probation, for the better understanding of this subject, we will remark, that, to understand the operations of God on mind, and the operations of mind toward God, is all important, in considering a free moral agent. That God does operate on mind, and that mind must co-operate with God, are truths plainly taught in the Bible. Theology and philosophy are two grand sciences. Theology teaches the nature and operations of God, philosophy the nature and operations of mind. We will say but little about theology at present: our business is principally with mind and its operations. And that we may better understand its nature and operations, we will consider the philosophy applied to mind.

And, first, very different views have been entertained as to the philosophy of mind. All agree, where there is a moral action, there must be determining power somewhere; but, where that power rests is disputed. All the views which have obtained notoriety on this subject, may be resolved into four. And, first, the philosophy that gives motive the power to determine the mind. Secondly, that philosophy that gives inclination the determining power over the mind or will

Thirdly, that philosophy which gives man the determining power, without divine agency. And, fourthly, that philosophy that gives man the determining power by divine agency. The latter we think the true philosophy, which alone sustains the doctrine of man's moral free agency. But, to be better understood, we will review the different theories, and mark their results.

First, motive: if that determines the mind, or if motive have the determining power, the being that governs the motive, governs the mind or choice, and the choice is necessitated; and if the choice be necessitated, free moral agency is lost; the being that controls the motive, controls the mind, and is responsible for the action.

But, secondly, the philosophy that gives the inclination the determining power. The inclination was inherited from another, over whom we have no personal control; and the choice is necessitated—whether Adam in innocence, or man in his fallen state. Adam received his quality of nature from God. We have received ours from Adam. Now, according to the philosophy, that inclination determines the mind, and that man can only choose as inclination dictates, how could Adam sin? Adam was holy; he was inclined to good. How, therefore, could Adam, according to that philosophy, put forth an evil action? He could not choose to sin; and his

inclination could not be impaired by his own act. But, as it is a fact, that he *did* sin, some evil agent, over whom he had no control, must have defaced the divine image, or erased it from his heart, and planted the principle of enmity to God therein. Then he had something within himself that accorded with the object presented by Satan; and thus he had power to do wrong, because he was inclined to evil. Or else his Maker, for the general good, as some suppose, by an act of his power, changed the law of his nature; and then he could sin, and be the subject of misery; and being a subject of misery, mercy could be developed; and thus sin would be for the general good; and as his object was to glorify his mercy, the end would sanctify the means. The same philosophy that is applicable to man in a state of probation, though a sinner, was applicable to Adam in innocency.

Thirdly. The philosophy that gives man determining power in his fallen state, without divine aid, so that he can choose life as well as death, is contrary to the Bible; and man, in his present state, is not deeply depraved: if man, by means or instrumentality alone, can correct his evils, and restore himself to the favor of God, you will find all those who consider man able to correct his evils by the use of means, deny the divinity of Christ, personality and influence of the Holy Ghost. And that philosophy is

infidelity in disguise, though it may be called by the name of Christ.

Fourthly. That philosophy that gives man power to act or determine by divine aid, or the agency of the Holy Ghost, and the means he uses to aid man rightly to determine, gives man, under an economy of mercy, power to use motive: he acts in view of motive, but he uses the motive. There is a great difference in the two theories. According to the first, the motive uses the mind; according to the second, the mind uses the motive. Man also has power to use inclination. He can determine to accord with his inclination, or go contrary to it. We see this daily developed: the lazy man has no inclination to labor; yet, knowing he will starve if he does not, he will do what he is not inclined to do. The sick man is not inclined to take medicine; he has no taste for it; yet he will take what he feels an aversion to, rather than die. The sinner is inclined to sin; he loves sin; and yet he can turn from it. Did not our Saviour teach this doctrine, when he said, "Except a man deny himself, take up his cross and follow me, he cannot be my disciple?" And did he not always teach this doctrine? Read the Bible throughout; it is full of proof, that man may act in accordance with his inclination, or go contrary to it. But where is it said in the Bible, that without Christ, we can do all these things? or what sinner convinced of his own

sinfulness can do so? We do all these things by the ability that God giveth.

We have said, the same philosophy that governs man in his probation, governed Adam in his probation. Adam was a free moral agent; he was not necessitated to good or evil; though he was upright, he might do either; he acted in view of motive, but the motive had not the determining power; the law of his nature or inclination was to good, but he was not determined by his inclination, or he would not have sinned. But he had power to act consistent with that law, or contrary to it. He chose the latter, and by his improper choice, he lost his purity. God did not destroy it, before he sinned; but he destroyed himself. He fell from his original rectitude, by his disobedience to a positive command, which was designed to test his loyalty; and thus became totally depraved, unable to help himself. According to the same philosophy, he must be brought back in the same way he went off from God. Here we might, for a moment, introduce theology, or the nature and operations of God, and see what he has done for us, for in him is our help. Now, man, as a free moral agent, could ruin himself, but could not restore himself. Therefore, if God had not graciously and sovereignly exercised his agency, man never could have returned to him. There were two impossibilities in his way; he was guilty, and could not atone; he was depraved,

and could not, except an atonement be made for him. God, therefore, chose the race of men, in Christ Jesus, to a day of probation.

Christ Jesus made an atonement for man; the Holy Spirit has come to operate on him and in him; to lead, and enable him to believe in Christ; and by his influence, and the means instituted by him, man is placed on equal ground with his foe. The law has been broken; and he cannot restore himself to its righteousness or holy nature. But God does not ask him to keep the law, in order to be restored to his favor; this is out of the question. But the gospel is a positive institution, with which he may comply; and by taking the vantage-ground of the gospel, he may be restored to the righteousness and holy nature of the law. The law cannot bring the sinner up to the gospel; but the gospel can bring a sinner up to the law.

It is not necessary, that the nature of the law be restored to the heart, in order to faith in Christ; the law would then bring the sinner up to the gospel, and the gospel would be of none effect. But, as Adam fell by violating a positive institution before he lost his purity, so the sinner, by the Holy Spirit's influence, complies with the gospel by faith, which is a positive institution, before he is regenerated. And, as according to the true philosophy of mind, though he acted in view of motive, he was not necessitated by it, though he was inclined to evil; yet that inclination did not

necessitate his choice; nor yet did he believe without divine aid. He was deeply sensible, by his own experience, that he could not save himself; yet he could cast his all upon Christ. And, as Adam lost his purity, or the divine image, by sin, so the believer is restored to the divine image by faith. By faith he enters into covenant with God. Justification, adoption, regeneration, sanctification, and glorification, are covenant blessings. The plan of the Bible is grace and duty. God calls; the sinner must obey the call. God makes known the plan of salvation; the sinner must accept it. Then God justifies, adopts, renews, sanctifies, and glorifies. The scheme of salvation originates with God, and is carried out in man's agency. The system is gracious; and personal accountability is secured. Election, in the first instance, was sovereign, gracious, and free; choosing all men to a day of mercy. Personal election turns on the choice of the sinner. Elect, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. And thus free moral agency is sustained. God receives all the glory of faith; and man all the damnation of unbelief.

I have endeavored, in as brief a manner as possible, to present the subject before the mind. The reader may wish for explanations; but the subject is too copious to admit an explanation of every point, in one short essay.

PREDESTINATION AND FORE-
KNOWLEDGE,

OR KNOWLEDGE AND DECREE.

SOME divines consider foreknowledge founded on predestination; others believe predestination is founded on foreknowledge: there are others who blend the two together, and consider them synonymous. We ask leave to offer a few thoughts on the perplexing subject.

And first, the Bible settles the question whether knowledge is founded on decree or decree on knowledge. Rom. viii. 29; "For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate." So we see, according to Paul, he did not decree and then know, but he knew and then decreed. As to whether knowledge and decree be the same thing, our knowledge of language must determine; knowledge is a perfection of the Divine Being, decree is an act. Now, if knowledge be essential to the being of God, and he could not know unless he decreed, then he purposed before he had a being. But this is absurd; therefore we conclude that knowledge belongs to his being, and decree to his operations; he must have a being before he can act, he must know before he decrees. His knowledge is infinite; but if it depends on decree, then decree makes it infinite—then all the perfection of

knowledge possessed by God is created, and is not a part of his being. But some consider that it establishes the doctrine of fate for God to know every thing. To this sentiment we would respond, would it not be idolatry to worship a being below infinity, and if the knowledge of God were not infinite would it not detract from his excellence and render him less the object of our esteem? We conclude, that if he did not know every thing, we could not confide in him with safety; we might be in trouble and need his aid, which could not be afforded, unless he knew it. It is certainly no objection in the mind of a good man that God is infinite in knowledge, or that he knows every thing: and fate cannot be attached to him on account of his infinite knowledge. It is desirable that he should know, and a pleasing thought it is, that he does know every thing. It is essential to his being to know every thing; but it is not essential to his being, nor is it desirable, that he be considered the author of every thing that comes to pass; for sin comes to pass, and it is not desirable that the object of our worship be the author of sin. He must know all he does, but he must not necessarily do all he knows. He knows what we will do as well as what he will do himself.

Our fate or end is no proof that he is the author of the evils which involved us in such an end: his knowing that a sinner will be turned into hell does not detract from his moral excellence. But if it

were known that he ordained him to hell, without the consideration of his choice, and executed his decree by his own agency that involved an intelligent being in the fires of hell, man might object to the divine character and refuse to worship him; and indeed it would seem impossible to love a being under the conviction that He was the author of all the evils that involved him in misery. But not so as relates to the knowledge of God; for from the very fact that he knows our down-lying and up-rising, and is acquainted with all our ways, he ought to be loved the more and trusted in with the greatest confidence. We cannot forbid Him who is infinite in knowledge, from knowing our end as well as our beginning, and all our ways; he is thereby considered the more worthy of the good man's love.

But let us conclude this subject by presenting the character of God, as made known in the Bible. His knowledge is infinite, his purposes are all formed on holiness, according to his infinite knowledge; and his knowledge being infinite, comprehends himself and all possibilities—he therefore knows himself and every other being. He knows what he will do himself, and what every other being will do; and on his knowledge of what ought to be done, knowing what is done, he fixes the destinies of all according to his infinite knowledge of what is right. According to the character of all is created intelligences, shall “not the Judge of

all the earth do right ?" His knowledge belongs to his being, his purposes belong to his operations ; foreknowledge belongs to the being of God, predestination to his operations. Knowledge is a perfection of his nature, decree is an act. We are authorised to believe, and it is a pleasing thought, that God knows every thing ; but we are not authorised from the Bible to believe that he does every thing he knows. Every thing God purposes and does, has holiness stamped upon it ; but many things have not this stamp, therefore they do not belong to his operations. But He tells us who is the author of all evil ; that the Devil is the father of lies, the father of inconsistencies and that man has destroyed himself ; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Sin is known of God, and is what he hates ; would he therefore be the author of what he hates ? Surely he knows what is wrong, but surely he would not purpose to tarnish his own glory.

ON THE PERSONALITY AND OFFICE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

By the term Holy Ghost, is meant a person, not an influence, a spiritual person, not a physical. His essence and personality belong to the being of

God, and his procession and office to the operations of the Godhead. According to the Bible, God is one and three: one in essence or perfection, three in person. By the unity of God, some understand only one person and one God, and exclude personality as belonging to the Holy Ghost—that by the Holy Spirit, we are to understand the influence the one holy person, or God, exerts on the universe, and not a distinct person in the Godhead, but a personal influence from the one God who is but one person.

We believe in a spiritual influence, put forth from one God, who is three as well as one; and that the Holy Ghost, so often mentioned in the Bible, is a person, belonging to the being of God, and who is a Holy Spirit, and by an agreement or covenant of the united three, is the person or agent who, by direct or indirect influence, brings every thing to pass.

This distinct personality in the Godhead is evident from the Bible.

1 From the fact that God is often spoken of in the Bible, by means of the plural number: “Let us make man,” &c. &c. Gen. i. 26. “The man is become as one of us;” Gen. iii. 22. The New Testament reveals how many persons there are in the Godhead. There are three, and their distinct names are given: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and these three are one.

2. Personal powers of will and understanding

are ascribed to him: 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11; also xii. 11. Eph. iv. 3.

3. He is an object of worship: Matt. xxviii. 19: also 2 Cor. xiii. 14. The personal pronoun is used in proof of his personality, John xiv. 26; xv. 26; xvi. 13; also Eph. i. 13. Personal offices are ascribed to him, Rom. viii. 26. A number of personal acts are ascribed to him: speaking, teaching, witnessing, &c. See Mark xiii. 11; Acts xx. 23; Rom. viii. 15, 16; 1 Cor. vi. 19; Acts xv. 28: also xvi. 6, 7. The Holy Ghost is a person, equal in power and glory to the Father and Son. Names applicable to the most high God are ascribed to him: Acts xxviii. 25. Heb. iii. 7, 9.

Attributes proper to be ascribed to God are ascribed to the Holy Ghost: 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11; Isa. xl. 13, 14. He is emphatically called God; see Acts v. 3, 4. "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." Almost innumerable passages of scripture prove his personality, and that he is a divine person, possessing power to will and work, and worship due him. He is equal in power and glory to the Father and Son, and essentially belongs to the being of God.

The united three, in counsel or covenant, in view of creating a moral universe, provided to meet all the incidents of the universe. The Father is considered as the conservative of the Godhead, the Son as the medium of communication, and the Holy Spirit as the agent by whose operation

every thing designed by God should be brought to pass, through the Son, by the direction of the Father. His operations, by some, are explained as extraordinary and ordinary : the former by making men prophets, the latter by his making men saints. By others, as direct and indirect : the direct without means, the indirect by means. And some exclude direct influence on the heart altogether ; and by the indirect, they evidently deny divine influence, and attribute all the means, without the Spirit. The means have the power to pardon and change the heart by appointment : not that there is any divine agency, giving the means efficiency, but the means themselves, being appointed by God, have the power to open or change the heart. Some consider the written truths of the Bible as the means, and the ministers of the gospel, as the agents to apply the truth, and by means of the truth they have power to change the heart ; and the Holy Spirit has nothing to do in our salvation. Indeed according to that theory, there is no Holy Ghost ; but God, who is but one person as well as one God, does all that is done in the world in its conversion by the agency of men, presenting the truths of the Bible before the minds of the people, and by man's agency, not the Holy Spirit, sinners are converted to God

But it is evident from the Bible, as we have shown, that there is a Holy Ghost ; and that his agency is as necessary in restoring order to the

moral world, which is a moral chaos, as his agency was necessary to the proper organization of the physical world, when in its chaotic state. And the Holy Spirit can operate directly, on spirit, as well as indirectly. He that made man, and gave him a living soul, can he not have access to that soul, without recourse to means which can only address the senses of the body? But if he choose means, and means addressing the soul through the body, is not the agency of the Holy Spirit as essential in the conversion of a sinner, as though he operated directly? The word of God is the great means, but the Spirit is the agent which makes the truth or the word of God efficacious; and ministers are but instruments in the great work. What would a sword do, if no skilful and powerful hand wielded it? And who is Paul? who is Apollos? but ministers. Paul planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So neither is he that planteth, or he that watereth, any thing, but God that giveth the increase. If then the agency of the Spirit be as necessary, where means are employed as where they are not, what has the objector to immediate influence of the Holy Ghost gained? The agency of the Spirit is essentially necessary. Then if any deny direct influence on the heart of a sinner, the indirect operation is necessary, and no sinner will ever be saved without the agency of the Holy Spirit, however appropriate the means may be,

The Holy Spirit is the agent which executes the divine purposes ; and he is called holy, not because he is essentially more so than the Father and the Son, but because his work is to make men holy. He executes the decrees of God ; and the decrees when brought to pass, have the impress of holiness on them. We may safely conclude that the Holy Spirit never brings to pass any thing unholy ; and as he executes the decrees of God, sin is not to be found in the decrees. The Holy Spirit produced the humanity of Christ, anointed him, and in the emblem of a dove, testified that he was the Son of God. He raised him from the dead. He descended on the apostles, and inspired them to preach in every man's tongue. He convinces the world ; his operations are as extensive as the atonement ; and the atonement as extensive as the Father's electing love which chose all men in Jesus Christ, that they might be holy or placed under a holy influence, exerted by the Holy Spirit. And when the sinner yields to that influence, he is led to Christ ; and when he receives Christ, he is justified, adopted, renewed by the Holy Ghost in the spirit of his mind, sealed to the day of redemption, comforted and sanctified. Thus the Holy Spirit has a great work to do in the world ; and without his soul-warming and holy influence, our world would be as cold religiously, as Greenland's icy mountain is naturally.

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit's personality and

holy agency is a pleasing sentiment; and he is promised to be with his servants to the end of the world. - And by his influence the wilderness and solitary places shall blossom as the rose. He not only calls sinners to repentance, but he also calls men to preach, and gives energy to their preaching. His fruits are pleasant fruits: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such things there is no law.

Who amongst men would be a Christian? And what would a Christian be without those graces of the Holy Spirit? Let us, my brethren, yield to his influence, and never grieve the heavenly dove. Let the sinner turn at his reproof; and he will lead him to Christ. Remember, sinner, it is a fearful thing to sin against the Holy Ghost.

A SYNOPSIS OF BIBLE DOCTRINES IN THEIR ORDER.

1 ALL religion supposes the worship of a God. The God of the Bible describes himself a Spirit; infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. Three classes of perfections are ascribed to him. 1st. Moral, which conveys to us the idea of law or rule. 2nd. Perfection, which conveys to

us the idea of agency ; wisdom to plan and power to execute, constitutes an agent ; an agent must have a rule or a law by which to act ; holiness is the rule of his agency : his willing or decreeing a thing does not make it a right, but he wills or decrees because it is right. The 3rd and last class of perfections ascribed to God, expresses the degree (if we may apply the term degree to Deity) in which he possesses the rule and power of action. He is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his rule and power of action.

2. The immutable perfections of his nature, which may be considered the law of his mind, and source of motive to his will, viz : holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, constitute the great principles of law to all intelligent beings. The law is immutable and universal. These grand principles cannot be brought down or modified to suit the weakness or wickedness of fallen creatures. The offender may be brought up to the standard at the pleasure of God, but if brought up at his pleasure, his plan must and will sustain every principle of the government and develop the law by which he, as a sovereign, purposes and acts. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right ? The Lord our God is holy, is essentially so, and declaratively so ; he is holy in all his works and righteous in all his ways.

3. Man was made upright, created in the image of God, natural and moral. By the natural, we understand he was an agent ; by the moral, the

nature of those immutable principles was printed in his mind. It was his duty to love God, and he was disposed to do it, but he was not confirmed in that holy and happy state: his not being created confirmed, does not prove that he cannot be confirmed in happiness or misery; but, according to the immutable principles of law, his agency must be regarded, which would not have been had he been created confirmed. His agency must be tested, and, in a duration of time, according to the part he acts while on trial, heaven or hell may be his eternal destiny, and the immutable principles of law fully carried out. Man's agency was tested by a positive institution, securing all the principles of a moral government. Man, the first man, the natural and legal head of all his race, eat the forbidden fruit, and by one man, this first man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

4. The Gospel is a positive institution, which does not change one principle of the moral law, modify or bring it down to the weakness and wickedness of man, but provides to bring fallen man up to its righteousness and holy nature, and may be considered the administration of the law in a way of mercy, through a Mediator. The gospel is good news, a bundle of good news, containing the following important articles: First in order, election, unconditional, an election of the race or whole family of Adam. We said election

of the race to a state of probation, unthought of and unsolicited by him, and without any condition required, whether he would accept or reject. He was graciously, and sovereignly, and freely chosen to this state without any condition on his part. The only condition, if it may be so called, was the death of Christ, if he died for the sins of the first Adam, he and his race shall have a personal being under an economy of mercy. What the Bible calls personal election turns on sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, and that is an election to a state of glory. But as I must close this article, I will do it without comment on the other points of the System. We have seen election of the race is first in order: second, the atonement: third, the operation of the Holy Spirit: fourth, conviction for sin: fifth, repentance: sixth, faith in Christ: seventh, justification: eighth, adoption: ninth, regeneration: tenth, sanctification: eleventh, glorification.

Oh, the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable his judgments and his ways past finding out. Had he not chosen and revealed the plan of salvation, the world never would have known it. Let us esteem that revelation, which not only tells of the past and the present, but of things to come.

ON SANCTIFICATION.

SANCTIFICATION is to be understood according to the Bible, in a two-fold sense: first, legally. When any thing or person is set apart by divine appointment to a holy use, as pots, tables, &c., the things themselves could have no holiness of nature, but by divine appointment were set apart to a sacred use. The children of believing parents have a federal or legal, but not an inherent holiness; when one or both of the parents believe in Christ, the children are called holy. See 1 Cor. vii. 14; "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." Not only the children, but the unbelieving husband and wife are sanctified by each other's faith, to some sacred purpose and privilege. We are not to understand that the faith of the wife regenerated the husband, nor the faith of the husband regenerated the wife, or the faith of one or both the parents regenerated the children, or gave them an inherent holiness; but brought them into a covenant relation with God: securing to the children advantages they could not enjoy out of the visible Church. The children of unbelieving parents, are not holy or sanctified in the same sense believer's children are; they are as

holy in their nature as the children of believing parents, but they are not legally so. Believing parents have rights and privileges promised by the Great Head of the Church, both for themselves and children, while the unbelievers have not. The promise to Abraham was, "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed." And again: Paul declares, Gal. iii. 9, "They which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." We have only to ask, how was Abraham blessed? and the answer is at hand: "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed."

From the above we have seen that persons and things that have no native holiness, can have holiness by appointment; and, according to Scripture language, can be pronounced sanctified.

But secondly, We are to understand sanctification as relates to the nature and quality of the heart and life; an inherent holiness, by which we understand the heart is set apart to the service of God; the love of sin is destroyed, and the affections of the soul sanctified—consecrated to the service of God. This principle, when carried out, practically, brings the child of God up to the fulness of the stature of Christ, to be a perfect man or woman in Christ Jesus. It is our main object to notice sanctification in the latter sense. Sanctification in this sense, commences in regeneration, and develops itself in all the departments of life, until holiness, like leaven, diffuses itself into every

thought, word, and action, until the person knows how to possess his vessel unto sanctification and honor. Regeneration and sanctification are considered as distinct doctrines by some, but the only difference is, regeneration begets the principles of holiness in the heart, and sanctification brings it to full stature. Regeneration implants the principle of holiness in the heart; sanctification, which is progressive, is the blade, the ear, the full corn in the ear. Various figures have been used to explain both.

One illustrates the subject thus: the Holy Spirit, who is the agent, first draws the great outlines of the Divine Image on the heart in regeneration, and fills up the out-lines in sanctification. According to this view, the perfect image is not formed until the great out-lines are filled up, and the person cannot be properly a Christian until the image is completed in sanctification.

But there is a different view, which we think is more scriptural and rational. The Holy Spirit, in regeneration, draws the perfect image of God upon the heart in miniature, and in sanctification, brings it up to manhood. Thus the Bible explains it: the blade, the ear, and full corn in the ear; the germ was planted in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and the grain was a complete grain; before it sent out its blade, it was not as large as when its blades and stalk, and full corn were produced, but it had the nature of corn as perfectly in the grain as in

the full ear. Another figure is used by inspiration, the child, the young man, and the old man. Now, in a child is there not every constituent part of an old man? has the old man any more members or senses than the child? No; but those senses are matured, so that he can better discern good and evil; the perfect man has learned how to use his members and senses for practical purposes, but the child is as perfectly a human being as the old man, but is not as perfect a man. The child has all the parts of human nature, and to advanced life there are no more members or senses created, but those members and senses are enlarged and strengthened; so with the spiritual child of God. The Holy Spirit, in regeneration, begets all the parts of the new man, and sanctification brings them up to full stature. When the child dies, it dies a human being, with all the members and senses of the matured man; when the child of God dies, if it be the hour of its birth, it carries with it all the spiritual members and senses of the old man in Christ: its knowledge and experience are not so extensive, but its holiness and love are as much the image of God as the old Christian. It is the duty of every Christian to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Every natural child is furnished with natural food, that it may grow thereby; so every child of God is furnished with spiritual food, and the better the food is suited to the age and

circumstances of the child, the better it thrives. There are two grades of vitality, the one is natural, the other is spiritual; the one is temporal, the other is eternal: the child of God may die a natural death, but not a spiritual death; he may die a temporal, but not an eternal death.

We are all, by nature, the children of the wicked one; but man's Creator, in his great compassion, has arranged a beautiful plan by which we may become his children. He first chose us to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for all mankind; the Holy Spirit convinces all men, and, by yielding to the Holy Spirit, in the exercise of repentance and faith, we are justified and are declared righteous, in view of the law in heaven's court, and are sanctified and set apart to a state of glory by divine appointment; and by the renewing influence of the Spirit our hearts are renewed, and we are sanctified inherently. We should therefore be careful to develop what we feel, feel what we believe, and believe the truth, and the truth will make us free; for we are to be sanctified through the truth. As God has been at infinite pains to make us holy, that we might be happy, may it be our concern to glorify God in our bodies and spirits, which are his. The more holy we live, the better we reflect the divine image on the world, and the happier we are ourselves.

ON ORIGINAL SIN.

Nothing is more evident than that sin is in the world. But how it entered has perplexed theologians, in every age and every part of the world. But too many have displayed more concern about its introduction, than its destruction. They have been curious as to the manner of its entering into the world, but not much concerned about having it taken away. All agree that it exists; and wisdom dictates that we should be united in one effort to have it removed.

But although we should unite in the removal of sin; yet it may not be improper to offer a few thoughts on its introduction, with due respect to the opinions of others, who have so widely differed on this perplexing question in theology.

“By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Romans v. 12.

And first, Adam, by creation, was a natural head to all his posterity; we having descended from him, have inherited his nature, both mental and physical. Secondly, Adam was a legal head, by covenant or appointment; and as such, his sin, first sin, which was a breach of covenant, was imputed to his posterity; and all the evils under which this world groans, both natural and moral,

may be traced to this cause; a curse rests upon all the family of Adam, and upon all things made for his benefit and placed under his control. Now the natural evils that prevail in the world, are the fruits of sin, either personal or representative. Some only admit of personal sin being the legal cause of suffering: while others maintain the imputation of representative sin as the cause of suffering, we believe that death or privation is a legal punishment for sin, whether personal or representative. Personal sin involves personal guilt, and personal damnation; and by personal sin, we may justly suffer in the present world, as well as in the world to come.

By personal sin, we may prolong our lives or shorten them; but by personal action, we cannot avoid death. Natural death is the reward of sin, but not of personal, but of representative sin—the sin of Adam: for in Adam all die. Now the sin of Adam, that brought death upon us all, considers death brought upon us, by *his* sin, as a legal punishment. See Rom. vi. 23: “For the wages of sin is death.” Again, see Heb. ix. 27: “And as it is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment.” That appointment may be found in Gen. ii. 17: “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” Adam ate the forbidden fruit and died; and we die in him, or on account of that

sin, which was a breach of covenant. Adam sinned as a legal head ; and by that sin, the whole race was to be blotted out, and Adam and Eve only to exist as subjects of personal suffering. Adam could no longer exist as a natural head, because, as a legal head, he had involved death, by a breach of covenant. But by the second Adam, Jesus Christ, who is not a natural head to the race of man, but a legal head, standing the trial of the first Adam, and atoning for his sin, securing by his representation, our personal being, by continuing the first Adam on earth, not as a legal, but a natural head. And we are introduced into the world personally, inheriting all his properties of nature, natural and moral ; as our natural head, depravity and mortality being brought on himself and us, by a breach of covenant, as our legal head.

Thirdly. But although all die in Adam, by the imputation of his first sin ; yet his sin has not destroyed personal accountability. Personal accountability is moral ; and no positive institution will ever be enjoined by God, that would infract moral principle. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." The son shall not die for the iniquity of the father : that is, shall not be charged with personal guilt, for the sin of another.

Adam's sin was imputed to his posterity ; but it was a representative sin ; and a representative sin is always committed against a positive institution ; and no positive institution will be given, that

will destroy moral principle. Personal accountability is moral. Adam's sin could involve his race in a thousand evils; and by it our world is inundated with evil, moral and natural; yet Adam's sin could not involve personal guilt and personal damnation. Every man shall die for his own iniquity. Now, as Adam's sin, as our legal head, has brought upon his race a train of evils, natural, moral, and spiritual, but yet has not destroyed personal accountability, we may infer—had he not broken covenant with God but kept his first estate—that he would have continued, both as a natural and legal head to his posterity; and we would have inherited his advantages, both natural and legal; we would have entered the world with healthy bodies, and upright souls, and under legal advantages far superior to his, while he was on trial, not liable to temptations as he was. Yet these advantages would not have destroyed personal accountability. We would have been required to acquiesce in that arrangement or covenant, by which he was constituted our legal head and representative.

But since Adam, as our legal head, broke covenant with God; and we are depraved and mortal, and our personal existence is by virtue of the representation of Jesus Christ, the second Adam, who is our head in law; our acquiescence personally is called for, in that covenant. Personal responsibility is not destroyed, by the repre-

sensation of Christ. Every sinner must believe, or accept that remedy for himself. Representative advantages do not set aside personal accountability; and notwithstanding we have inherited Adam's corrupt nature, and are surrounded by temptations to sin; yet, by the provisions of the new and well ordered covenant, of which Christ is our legal head, we are under no necessity to choose that which is sinful. For the gospel, by the Holy Spirit, and the means he has instituted, counteracts our depravity, by enlightening our minds in the knowledge of divine things; and thus life, as well as death, are set before the mind. And as the mind can only feel guilt, when it has made a wrong choice; and as the wrong is only discovered by the right; if the mind did not apprehend truth, it could not know falsehood. When, therefore, the mind feels guilty, it is because it has made a wrong choice, in view of right. For we can only determine the finite, by the Infinite. The object or design of the gospel, in setting life before the mind, is to direct and enable the sinner to make a correct choice. If he choose life, he shall live; but if, under these advantages, although he be a sinner, he choose death, he shall die: he will be personally guilty, and personally damned.

ON THE RESURRECTION.

THE resurrection of the body, belongs to the foundation on which the Church is built, and is an important part of it. 1 Cor. xv. 16, 17; "For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." Again, see 20th verse; "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." But as the doctrine is mysterious, and lies beyond human reason, we will offer a few arguments to sustain it; for although it be mysterious, it is not absurd, and therefore, can be sustained by argument.

And first: The resurrection of the body, being a part of human identity, is desirable. It is so, not only as relates to one, but as every man belongs to the same race of beings, it is also desirable, as relates to the great whole; every human being is tenacious of his person—body as well as soul; and as the body must die, there is great solicitude felt that it should rise again, and rise in a better state than it now enjoys. The individual not only desires his body, to be united with the soul for ever, but he has many friends he desires to meet in full person—body as well as soul—and whose personal presence as well as personal

friendship, will afford pleasure. We conclude, the resurrection is desirable, being founded in the constitution of man, which affords an argument in its favor.

Secondly: It is possible. When we view the infinite wisdom, almighty power, &c., of the Creator of man, shall we think it incredible, that God should raise the dead? He who gave him being at first, can he not as easily raise the body from the dust, as he could form it out of the dust.

Thirdly: It is probable that a God who has given man being under such favorable circumstances, will raise him from the dead. From all we know of ourselves, as the workmanship of God, and from what we know of him, is it not probable that God will raise the dead.

Fourthly: It is certain there shall be a resurrection, both of the just and unjust. The Bible places the doctrine beyond controversy; text after text might be quoted in its favor; but we will not insert them at this time; let the doubtful mind read the Bible.

Fifthly: The doctrine is a provision of the Gospel. It is in the Gospel that life and immortality are brought to light: our resurrection is founded on the resurrection of Jesus Christ; and His resurrection is founded on his death; and his death on his voluntary consent to take our place, in law. There shall be a resurrection, both of the just and unjust; the whole human family will

rise, small and great. Then Christ rose for all; and if He rose for all, He must have died for all; and if He died for all, He must have consented to do so; and if he consented to do so, it must have been because the law required it; and if the law required it, God the Father, who is the conservator of the God-head, must have given him up to take the sinner's place in law: and in Him chose the human family to obtain salvation; and He, Jesus Christ, is the Saviour of all men; especially of those that believe. And as he consented to die for all men, and rose again from the dead for all men, so He was appointed the Judge of quick and dead, and we must all appear before the Judgment seat of Christ, to answer for the improvement of all the advantages secured us by His intervention. He has secured advantages for all men, and therefore, all men must stand before the Judgment seat of Christ.

Sixthly: The manner of the resurrection. Whether the same body will arise, or a body at all—only something ærial—has been controverted. This matter can only be settled by the Bible.

And first: Christ rose with the very same body He died with; and the body that died, was the same that was born of the Virgin Mary.

Second: He shall change our vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto His glorious body. His body became more glorious, when His work of humiliation was completed; but it was the

same body. His transfiguration was designed and calculated to show the disciples the glory of an immortal body, and was the most striking development of immortality ever beheld; and our bodies shall be like the glorious body of Christ; yet the same body. Every man, therefore, in the resurrection, shall have his own body: the saint will not inherit the body of the sinner.

Spiritual bodies, freed from the power of all the laws of organic matter. They will not hunger, nor thirst, nor be weary. They will have no tendency to the centre of matter, by the laws of gravitation, as the present body has. But this mortal shall put on immortality: the same body that was mortal shall put on immortality, and death shall be swallowed up in victory. We are not to expect all the particles that belong to this body, when it dies; or belonged to it in all its mutations, in its short history of mortality. This is not desirable, but the resurrection of the body is desirable, and this is sustained.

Seventhly: The character of the resurrection. Morally, the resurrection of the body, is founded on the resurrection of Christ: but the character of the resurrection, will turn on personal responsibility. They that have done good, shall come forth to the resurrection of life, a capability of higher enjoyments; and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation, a capability of deeper misery. We cannot, by personal effort,

escape the resurrection. We must rise, whether we are good or bad; but we can escape, by personal effort, a resurrection of damnation, and may come forth to the resurrection of life.

ON BAPTISM.

WITHOUT any preliminary remarks, we explain BAPTISM to mean the application of one thing to another, with a view to cleanse, purify, or set apart to some particular use; and it expresses the thing done, and not the mode of doing it. Whether the thing applied be water, blood, fire, or spirit, to either body or mind, the application of one thing to another is done to cleanse, purify, or set apart to some particular purpose or use; and this is baptism. With this explanation, let us notice all the texts, or most of them, which speak of baptism.

And first, the baptism of the children of Israel to Moses in the cloud and in the sea; see 1 Cor. x. 2. The miracles wrought at the Red Sea, called baptism, were designed to set apart the children of Israel to obey Moses as their leader.

2nd. Jesus Christ was baptized by John: See the connection, as recorded by the Evangelists. God gave to Moses a shadow of Christ's priesthood, which was to be confined to the family of Aaron

and tribe of Levi. John was of the above family and tribe, and was specially appointed to prepare the way of the Lord. In the discharge of his duty, he made a transfer of the Levitical priesthood, of which he was one, to Jesus Christ, who, according to the flesh, was of the tribe of Judah, and thus the shadow was transferred to the substance. And the baptism John administered to Christ, was not designed to perpetuate the Levitical priesthood, but to put an end to it, by transferring the Levitical priesthood to Christ, and thus to set him apart to close the whole sacrificial dispensation, by the offering of himself once for sin. He acted as the priest; He offered himself; and, from the time of his offering, the shadow fled away; and God has not required any of Aaron's family, or Levi's tribe, to offer the blood of any victim for sin. The shadow has fled; Aaron lays aside his robe; and the Jewish altar ceases to smoke with the blood of slain beasts for sin. By one offering, and that himself, and by himself, he "finished transgression, and to make an end of sins." Four thousand years of darkness had covered the world. Types and shadows had pointed to the great anti-type and substance. Men had officiated as priests. But when the Truth or substance of all the types makes his appearance, who is a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec, and not after the order of Aaron; Aaron transfers all his authority to Christ in the act of baptism.

3rd. Christ was baptized with blood or suffering. "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?" This baptism set him apart to make intercession for us: He entered the holy place, that is, heaven, by his own blood.

4th. John's baptism with water was designed, in addition to his transferring the Levitical priesthood to Christ, which was but the shadow of his priesthood, who is a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec, to set apart the Jewish nation to receive the gospel. He therefore baptized them to repentance, saying, that they should believe on him that should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

5th. He [Christ] shall baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. The Apostles were set apart, who were unlearned men, by the baptism of the Holy Ghost, to preach the gospel in every man's tongue.

6th. The Christian baptism, the application of water by an authorized minister to a fit subject, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. This baptism, which is but an outward sign of an inward grace or baptism, sets the subject apart to membership in the visible Church.

7th. Spiritual baptism, which sets an individual apart to membership in the invisible Church. This baptism means to cleanse, purify, or set apart to some particular use. We think it unsafe to make

baptism mean immersion or any mode of doing the thing. John baptized with water. There must be some mode of doing every thing, and often many modes; but there is a striking difference between the thing done and the mode of doing it. John baptized *with* water, not *in* water. Christ baptized *with* the Holy Ghost and fire, not *in* the Holy Ghost and fire. The children of Israel were *baptized* and not *immersed*. The Egyptians were *immersed* and not *baptized*. Christ should baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire—not fire literally—but, as fire is a purifying element when applied to matter, so a holy influence applied to the soul cleanses, purifies, and sets it apart to membership in the invisible Church. To be baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire, and to be born of the water and Spirit, seem to mean the same thing: fire has a purifying influence, so has water; and both fire and water represent the purifying influence of the Holy Ghost. The Spirit or Holy Ghost applies a purifying, a holy influence to the heart. The text does not surely mean a literal application of either fire or water to the body with a view to cleanse the soul, but a spiritual application of a holy influence by the Holy Ghost to cleanse, purify, and set the soul apart to the service of God. We would not pretend to say the mode constitutes the thing, or that the mode of doing and the thing done are the same. The thing done is baptism; the mode of doing it is something else.

But as baptism must be done in some mode, and as water baptism is only the sign of the Spirit's baptism, we can safely say, the baptism of the Spirit is administered by pouring.

See Acts i. 5—"For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence." In explanation of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, see Acts ii. 17, 18: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh, &c. And on my servants and on my hand-maidens I will pour out, in those days, of my Spirit," &c. The latter, therefore, explains the mode of baptism by the Holy Ghost, mentioned in the foregoing. Baptism, as we have explained, means the thing done, and not the mode of doing it. Yet as some mode is necessary in doing all things, some mode must be observed in administering baptism. And as the Bible has not expressly revealed the mode, we are left to infer that pouring is a proper mode of application; for it cannot be wrong to apply water to the body in Christian baptism, in the same mode the soul is baptized by the Holy Ghost.

THE SABBATH.

I find it written, "Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the Lord." Lev. xix. 30.

The Sabbath and Sanctuary are standing monuments of important facts, recorded in the book of God, and they are also valuable emblems of things to come; and, as such, ought to be sacredly regarded by man. The Sabbath is a memorial of the creation of the world, and the resurrection of Christ; and those who would blot out the Sabbath, would erase the finger of God from creation, and say with the fool, 'There is no God. The Sabbath ought not only to be kept as one of seven days, but should be kept holy to the Lord. We are commanded to labor six days for the benefit of our bodies; and the day called the Sabbath, for the benefit of souls, by devoting it exclusively to the service of God, for his glory and our good, our spiritual edification and comfort. God has appointed a weekly Sabbath, and, under the Jewish economy, he appointed other days, called Sabbaths, to commemorate important events. Whatever God has appointed must be sacredly regarded by us—"Thou shalt keep my Sabbaths." While the Sabbath enjoins certain duties, it also forbids every thought, word, and action, being

performed on the Lord's day, which would divert our minds from the service of God. We all agree that it forbids all kinds of manual labor, except works of necessity and mercy. But how many of us, have learned to promote our worldly interest on the Lord's day, by other arrangements than manual labor. Wordly interest is promoted, and the mind called off from the service of God by bargain making, on the Sabbath; a journey is to be taken; Sabbath is the day, or one of the days visits must be paid; friends must be seen; Sabbath is the day the social party is formed; all the subjects of conversation are demoralizing, and calculated to banish thoughts of God, and to inflate the soul with pride and vanity: and thus the object of the Sabbath is lost. We have sometimes known the house of God to be almost forsaken; the family must stay at home to entertain company, when all ought to have been at Church, the family and company. We have generally found the poor more careful to keep the Sabbath than the rich; yet sometimes the poor plead their poverty for breaking the Sabbath—we have to work hard all the week, and have no other time for pleasure or friendly visits, but Sunday; and we must go. Would it not be a kind act for the men of this world, when they find the member of the Church desecrating the Sabbath, to admonish them not to break the Sabbath, that they ought to be at home instructing their families, or

at the Church in Sabbath School, prayer meeting, or at preaching, endeavoring to build up Zion, by provoking their fellow-citizens to love and good works. We should keep the Sabbath holy, not only because it is monumental, but also because it is emblematic of our eternal rest in the kingdom of God—"there remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God," and they that keep the Sabbath, keep that rest in view; and they who keep the Lord's Sabbath on earth, will keep the eternal Sabbath. But those who want no Sabbath in this world, will have none in the next; they will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

But 2ndly: We must reverence the Sanctuary. The Sanctuary is a holy or sanctified place, as 1st. the Holy of Holies, where the Ark and its appurtenances, and the cloud representing the divine glory, stood; Lev. iv. 6. The whole Jewish Temple is called the Sanctuary. Any place appointed for the public worship of God is the Sanctuary, the place where God dwells, and under the gospel dispensation, wherever his people meet to worship, there is a house for God. Our houses of public worship, built and dedicated to him, are his Sanctuary; it is God's house, He is the proprietor, and is represented as dwelling in it; and those who go to the Sanctuary, go there to worship God. We should be respectful, in our outward deportment, in the house of God; if it be the duty of the young to bow before the hoary head and honor

the old man, we should all bow before God, on approaching his house, and honor him by taking off our hats at the door of his house, and enter into his presence with deep humility. When services are opened, we should take an active part in them, and not sit there like statues, or by whispering, talking and laughing, tell God we have no reverence for his name, and tell (by the fool's eye) the whole congregation, that we do not know how to behave ourselves in the house of God. We think it indecorous to come into the house of God with hats on, and as soon as service is over, and sometimes before the benediction is pronounced, pick up hats, and sometimes we have seen, to our mortification, cigars lighting up, hats putting on, loud talk and perhaps loud laughter, all in the house of God; and perhaps too, after a solemn sermon, where probably serious mourners have knelt at the altar of prayer.

Preachers and people should be careful how they enter the house of God; the whole service should be orderly and solemn, and the same care should be taken when we close it. We should close the service respectfully, and not destroy all the good that might have been done during the sermon, by irreverence at the close. Nothing tells to more advantage, on the intelligence and piety of a people, than their behavior in the house of God. The old saying is true—the state of the people is known by the state of the temple. An

indifferent house, indifferently kept for the worship of God, more strikingly discovers a want of interest as well as good taste: and although we would be far from extravagance, as to the house and its furniture, yet all houses of worship ought to be decently kept, and gravity should mark the house in all its departments. The people should strive above all things, in this world, to be decorous in the house of God.

But there may be an orderly congregation, in view of men, and yet the heart may not be right in the sight of God; and all the service in His sight may be disorderly, for the want of the true spirit of religion. God is a Spirit; let this always be borne in mind by the worshipper; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth: in spirit, in opposition to form; in truth, in opposition to error.

ON MISSIONS.

OUR Church is not doing all she could to promote the cause of Christ, in our great missionary-field, the Valley of the Mississippi, and in the whole world, which is a missionary-field, and now white to harvest. Some are doing but little for want of system, as they say, in our Church. Now I do not say we have the best system; I believe it can be

greatly improved ; but if it be improved, it must be done practically. We must operate on the capital we have, or it will not increase ; we must reduce to practice, or it will not likely be bettered. The best address ever delivered on charity, is a practical address. “Be ye warmed and filled,” will not warm and fill.

Our system will do, until, by practice, we learn better. Our Constitution authorises the pastoral relation and missionary plan. The plan is laid down, by which the pastoral relation is formed. A Church that wants a pastor, and a minister who wants a settlement, as pastor, have a plain system of operation before them. Let the minister devote his time to pastoral duties. Let the Church sustain him by prayer, and by all other means that may be necessary ; and the Lord will give the increase. But although the system of operation is plain and good ; yet, if the preacher and the people neglect duty, the Church cannot be sustained. If a pastor wants to serve the people, he can do it ; and if the people wish to give to the preacher, if they *will* give, nothing shall be lost for want of form.

Our Assembly is a Missionary Society ; it has its Missionary Board ; there are and will be regular channels to that Board ; and that Board, so soon as it has funds for either Foreign or Domestic missions, will endeavor, so far as it has men and means, to sustain or amply occupy every important station.

Synods are all Missionary Societies; let them be auxiliary to the parent Society. Presbyteries are also Missionary Societies; let the Presbyteries provide for their part of the great field, and aid the Parent Society. Congregations are Missionary Societies, let them see that their own congregation is supplied with all the means of salvation, and also aid the destitute.

Every individual member of the Church should feel bound to aid the whole; in so doing he sustains himself as well as others. Now, my brethren, let us improve our system *practically*; let us go to work with the system and means we have. A minister was once called on to preach to a benevolent institution a sermon; his last proposition was to deliver a practical argument on charity. When he came to that division of his subject, he put his hand in his pocket and pulled out the money, saying the poor had been starved by speculative benevolence; he proposed to treat it practically: "Give me your money, and I shall say no more."

The policy that is wanting in our Church, and in every Church, is practical policy. We want missionaries in all parts of our country. In Cities and Towns, where we have no Churches nor preachers, our Board of domestic missions, as well as foreign, is ready to receive all money that may be sent, and make as wise an appropriation of it as possible. Let individuals Societies, Presbyteries,

and all others direct their money to the Treasurer of the Assembly's Board of Domestic and Foreign Missions of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, at Lebanon, Wilson county, Tenn. The contributions of concert prayer-meetings will be received and appropriated. Will we not resolve that, in addition to our own Churches, Presbyteries, &c., we will every year send something to aid the Board, in sending to the destitute, and where our Church is not planted.

The way is open, and where there is a will there is a way. Solomon remarks, that through much weariness, the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands, the house droppeth through. A lazy man is almost always out of work, as well as of means: an industrious man can always find something to do.

My brethren, if we are really disposed to work, there is work enough to be done. Let us go to work practically; and if we have but two mites, it will be much in God's esteem. But let us remember, it is practical work that is wanted to be done. We may think of doing good, and do nothing. May the Lord rouse us all up to suitable action, for the time is at hand, when the Judge of all the earth will say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat," &c.; not that you thought ye would, but that ye did feed me. He that wishes to aid the cause of missions, can find a way to do

it. There is money enough in our Church to sustain a missionary in every important place in our bounds, and aid the foreign field, besides sustaining the pastoral relation in many congregations, if our brethren would encourage practical policy. By sustaining pastors at home and missionaries abroad, the work of God would prosper better amongst us, and our ministers, who could be tempted by money, to leave our Church, would be guarded against such temptations. But who amongst us, who have been born again in our church, could be tempted to sell their birth-right for a mess of red pottage, or their Master for thirty pieces of silver?

Other denominations may solicit funds from our Church to assist their treasury, and with that money attempt to buy up the ministers of our Church, and send them out into their own field. But let us not find fault with others, but endeavor, as Rev. John Wesley once said to his brethren, let us out-preach, out-pray, and out-live all others. And let us excel all others in bringing all the resources and energies of our Church to sustain the cause of Christ.

THE CHURCH WANTS MORE MINISTERS

OF THE RIGHT STAMP.

AN uncalled, unsent, unholy, and unfaithful ministry, is the Church's greatest curse. A ministry called and sent of God, holy and faithful, is the Church's greatest blessing. The middle of the 19th century needs not only more preachers, but preachers qualified for the peculiar labor of this age—men apt to teach, patient, who will not hold their peace day nor night; wise to win souls, who know how to behave themselves in the house of God—men who know how rightly to divide the word of truth, giving to each their portion in due season, prudent, faithful, humble, holy, zealous, watchful—men who will hazard their lives, fortunes, and every thing in this world, for Christ's sake and the salvation of souls—men who will seek to please God rather than men, and who will seek to please other men rather than themselves, who will preach Jesus, the Lord, and not themselves—men whose hearts *feel*, whose eyes weep, and whose heads are fountains of water—men who are devoted to the cause of God, and not afraid to lift up their voices like a trumpet, and show the

house of Israel their sins—men who will warn sinners to flee the wrath to come, while it is yet to come, who will take mouthfuls of the threatened wrath of God, and pour it upon the wicked, who shall be turned into hell—men who will be instant in season and out of season, who will exhort and rebuke with all long-suffering and doctrine, who will teach publicly, and from house to house—men who know how to comfort the feeble-minded, to support the weak, and to be patient toward all men—men who will exemplify what they preach, preach what they feel, feel what they believe, and believe the truth—men born of God, called of God, filled with the Holy Ghost, and clothed with salvation. Then the saints will shout aloud for joy. Men, wise as serpents and harmless as doves—men who can endure with the ox, soar with the eagle, roar with the lion, reason with the man, and love with the angel—men who weep between the porch and the altar, and who will stand between the living and the dead—men who will endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt—men who esteem Jerusalem above their chief joy, and who will only glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Men of the above character will show sinners the way of life: they will take Zion by the hand; they will feed the flock of God, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre but

of a ready mind. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, they shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away, and will present a holy flock before the Son of Man, at his appearing. They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars, for ever and ever.

May the great Head of the Church raise up men, eminently qualified to meet the wants of the Church and the world, the next half century. Men who will bless the next generation, must enter the sacred office with thoughts that breathe, and words that burn with living fire.

The fields are large and white to harvest, and the Macedonian cry is heard from almost every quarter, "Come over and help us," or send us help. The laborers are few—the Lord of the harvest should be appealed to, with great fervor and importunity by the Church for more laborers—the prayer to be successful, must be attended with corresponding efforts. Institutions of learning must be sustained by the Church, and particularly when young men for the ministry can be aided in their high profession. To aid young men preparing for the ministry, not only personal effort should be made, but education associations should be formed; a congregation, a Presbytery should aid all the young men, candidates for the ministry, who need aid, to receive an education, and send them to some good institution capable of qualifying

them to come up fully to our excellent standard, and as much farther as circumstances may justify.

The first duty of the Church, in supplying the fields white already to harvest, is to pray the Lord of the harvest, who alone has the right to call laborers, to call a full supply for the field.

The second duty is to aid them to obtain that education necessary, if they have not obtained it, and have not the means themselves. Education societies should be formed, and to sustain them is the third step the Church should take. The fourth step should be to form Home and Foreign missionary societies, as well as the congregational call, to sustain those that God may call and qualify for the work. All these steps taken by our Church, the Macedonian cry will be responded to in the true spirit of the gospel, and ministers will go in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ; men will be sent to preach the gospel, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and the harvest of the earth will be gathered. The University at Lebanon will afford all the aid it can: the tuition of young men for the ministry shall be gratis. A lecture on some branch of theology shall be gratis, once a week. The Church and citizens of Lebanon will aid, and are doing what they can. Let the Church abroad, as well as here, pray and contribute of their means as God has prospered them, and the work will advance.

Our system of doctrines will do; the constitution of our Church will do; but we want men of great energy of character in sufficient numbers, to send into all the world, to aid other Christian denominations in the world's conversion.

Our Church is purely American. Its doctrines more conservative, or as much so as any other, and therefore well calculated to hasten the millennial glory of the Church of Christ.

THE CHURCH WANTS MOTHERS.

THE Church not only needs more ministers of the right stamp, but she wants mothers to train up children for the Church. It is said, when France was involved in national difficulties, some ladies were in conversation together on that subject; and the conclusion was, that France needed mothers to train up sons for the defence of their country. Bonaparte heard the remark, and directed the mothers of France to train up their sons under the sound of the drum, and other instruments of music, with a view to inspire them in early life with martial skill and military ardor. The result was that he soon had an invincible army to defend his country. It has been said, they that rock the cradle govern the world. If so, and we think it

pretty correct, the Church wants mothers to inspire the children with a missionary spirit in early life. The field the Church has to cultivate, is large; the country she has to incorporate is extensive; the enemies she has to conquer are many and powerful. She wants ministers of the right stamp; and mothers must aid, by inspiring a love for Christ and souls in the hearts of their sons. Let them talk to their children about the wretched condition of the world, the love of God, the death of Christ for the world, the Holy Spirit's influence on the world, and the high commission given to men—"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," with the promise made, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." And above all, let mothers loan their Samuels to the Lord, as long as they live; let them pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest. And, if he should call their sons, aid them in obtaining a suitable education, make their coats, and furnish them, as far as possible, with every thing in their power, so that they may minister before the Lord. How many mothers, at an early period, inspire their sons with prejudice and opposition to religion, and the office of the holy ministry. They tell their sons, that the office is not honorable, not lucrative, much labor and little profit. You must not think of being a preacher. Other employments and professions are more reputable and

profitable. Look at the merchant, the politician, the lawyer, the doctor. Strive, my son, to be something, and do not throw yourself away. Your parentage is too respectable, your endowments too rich, your talents too great, and mind too noble, to engage in such an unprofitable employment as the gospel ministry. And thus, no doubt, mothers, who ought to aid the church, hang as dead weights on the wheels of Zion, and are keeping back many whom the Lord would send. Oh! ye mothers in Israel, have you dedicated your children to God? Train them up to be his. And although you have not the right to call them to the work of the holy ministry; yet you can, and you ought to train them up to the Lord's service. And although you cannot call them to the work, yet for want of your aid, many whom the Lord calls may be kept back. And were the sons of the Church dedicated to God, and trained up with a spirit of Christian enterprise, the Lord of the harvest would call more; and those called would meet with more aid, might be sooner in the field, and better laborers.

Mothers in the Church, let me say a word to you before I close. You may have overlooked the importance of the office to which God may have called your sons; and for which you should train them. The office is paramount to all others. "He that winneth souls is wise." Should the Lord call your Samuels, he will put honor upon

you the world can never give. Train up your sons early to love the Saviour, to love souls. And may your sons, whom God may call, raise the flag of mercy, in view of many dying sinners, be a comfort to you, a blessing to others, and die at their posts.

THE CHURCH WANTS MORE SISTERS.

WHEN the Lord Jesus Christ sent out his ministers or disciples, "Peter said to him, we have left all and followed thee." Mark x. 28, 29, 30; "And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive a hundred-fold now in this time; houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecution, and in the world to come eternal life." The ministers of Christ are promised sisters as well as other friends; and at this time, when the Church needs so many faithful preachers, and the Lord is raising up young men, who are forsaking all, I hope for Christ's sake and the gospel's; the Church needs sisters who will feel interested for

the cause of God. Moses' sisters helped him, Paul's aided him, and the present ministers want sisters to help them; sisters who will pray for them. Sisters of Lebanon, your influence can be felt, not only in this congregation and town, but as so many youths are thrown amongst you from a distance, for educational purposes; and many from a distance preparing for the holy ministry, your influence will be felt afar off, and through all time. In addition to your closet prayers, and your prayers at the family altar, (for you are not forbidden to pray there, and many of the best sisters of the Church have prayed with their families—the writer of this had a mother who prayed regularly in the absence of the father, and her prayers were seldom offered without tears from her eyes, and the eyes of her children,) your social prayers, united, fervent, faithful prayers will be heard at the court of heaven, and answered in blessings rich and profuse upon the Church and the world. But in addition to your prayers, much good may be done by your counsel, example, and the labor of your hands; many weak Churches and poor people, have been aided by the hands of devoted females. Sisters of Lebanon, you are doing much, not only by prayer, but by the labor of your hands, I trust; but can you not, by a united effort do more? United, you would provoke one another to love and good works, and accomplish more for others. Seek out some

benevolent object, some needy person, to whom your own hands could minister, and let it be said in the day of eternity, by those to whom you have ministered, when you shall meet in the streets of glory, these are the hands that ministered to me in the town of Lebanon or elsewhere, in yonder world. Sisters, your united efforts would provoke all around you to love and good works. Let me remark, in conclusion, that if all the preachers and lay members of the Church in Lebanon, fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, were doing what they could to honor God and save souls, ignorance and crime would blush to be seen in our streets, every sinner would repent and turn to God, or leave the place; and our friends at a distance, who love their children, would have cause to praise God for ever, for the blessings bestowed on their children who were sent to Lebanon, in whose happiness the sisters took such an active part.

The tender hearted sisters will pardon the freedom I have used in calling on them to help the Church. She cannot live without your aid on earth, and her bliss would be incomplete in heaven, if you were not actively employed there.

LETTER ON CHURCH DOCTRINES.

Addressed to the Editor of the Cumberland Presbyterian.

I TAKE all the periodicals of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, weekly and monthly, and a few short articles have appeared in them from my pen; but I do not recollect of having written anything to you to fill the columns of the Cumberland Presbyterian. I have had many thoughts of doing so, but they have gone like the morning cloud and early dew. But this morning the Rev. Mr. Lindley and myself, in conversation about old Tenmile, revived some thoughts which I will send you for publication, if you think proper.

And first, my mind turned on the providence of God, that gave birth to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. She was not brought forth by a spirit of faction. No opposition was entertained to the mother Church as a cause of her origin. She loved her mother, and would have willingly staid under her roof had she not spurned her from her bosom. But for what was she thrown from a mother's arms? Not heresy, immorality, or contumacy, for she was never convicted of either. But the providence of God that gave rise to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in your country occupied my mind, and with thoughts on that subject the balance of my sheet will be filled.

Early in 1831, if I mistake not, a vacant congregation of the Presbyterian Church on Upper Tenmile, Washington county, Pa., having seen in Buck's Theological Dictionary, a succinct account of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, by their Session, directed one or two of their members to write to some member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. At the General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, in May, 1831, Dr. Cossit laid before that body a letter or two from that country, requesting some one or more ministers of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church to visit them. Whereupon the Assembly appointed Rev. Messrs. Alexander Chapman, John Morgan, A. M. Bryan, Reuben Burrow, and R. Donnell to visit that country. Those brethren appointed to hold a Camp Meeting on Tenmile, Washington county, Pa., the third Sabbath of September following, if the people were willing to do so. They parted in Nashville in May. Chapman, Morgan, and Bryan, soon after started, and travelling and preaching through Kentucky and Ohio, reached their destination perhaps some time in July. Burrow and Donnell passed through Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia, and part of Maryland, crossing the Alleghany Mountains, on the Cumberland Road, and met their brethren on Saturday, before the third Sabbath in September, according to appointment, in a large encampment on Tenmile, Washington county, Pa. I then

felt, and yet feel, the Lord directed that mission. When I survey the ground over which I travelled, in that country, and remember the kind reception we met with, the many warm hearts and weeping eyes we left behind, when we bid farewell to that land, we could wish ourselves standing in your midst once more. But this wish may never be met, until we meet in heaven. To that land may all our hearts aspire and our faces be set!

The doctrines first preached amongst you are, we presume, preached still—a system calculated to give God all the glory, and yet to save the veriest sinner of Adam's family who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ. I will close with a brief summary of the Doctrines:—

1st. The Unity of God. 2dly. The Trinity of God. 3rdly. His perfections, divided into three classes; 1st. His moral, which constitute a rule of action. 2dly. His natural wisdom and power, which constitute an agent. 3rdly. Those perfections which convey to our mind, an idea of the degree in which he possesses the rule and power of action. He is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth.

4. Man was created upright, but fell from that holy and happy estate, into an estate of sin and misery.

5. God graciously chose all mankind to a day of probation in Christ, and personal election turns

on sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.

6. Jesus Christ is both divine and human—two distinct natures and one person for ever.

7. He died for all men. As many as were elected to a day of probation, were atoned for by the Son.

8. The Holy Spirit convinces the world, and operates on as many as were atoned for, and as many as were elected. All were atoned for, because the Father had chosen all to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ.

9. Conviction is the result of Divine operation.

10. Repentance.

11. Faith in Christ.

12. Justification.

13. Adoption.

14. Regeneration.

15. Sanctification.

16. Glorification.

17. The resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

18. A day of judgment and a state of future rewards and punishments.

And now, my dear brother, as I may never more see you, or any of the dear people who read your valuable paper, let me exhort you all to stand fast in the faith—quit yourselves like men—be strong. The Church in that country must act defensively. Sustain your own ground, but be not

contented with defence alone. You must operate aggressively; you must pull down strongholds of sin and Satan: you must strive for Church extension, and when you lengthen your cords you must strengthen your stakes. There is much land yet to be possessed; and while you are defending your own ground, and building up your own Church, always be ready to extend the hand of Christian friendship, to all who are doing the work of Christ, as ye also do. You must not be inattentive to Education, that excellent handmaid of the Church. The old saying is true, they that rock the cradle govern the world, and they that teach the children will church them. Do not think if you are inattentive to schools, you can hold up your Churches. Your people must take an active part in the labor and expenses of schools, and so with your ministers; and never believe you can serve God with that which costs you nothing.

Finally, brethren, farewell! Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind. Live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you. Work with God, and work with one another.

THE INTERESTS OF THE CHURCH.

The University of Lebanon promises, at this time, to meet the most sanguine expectations of its friends; and could there be a Theological Department, in full operation, the Church in general would be greatly profited. A Theological Department, well sustained, has long been a desideratum in our Church, and if our Church would form Educational Societies, and by personal, congregational, and Presbyterian efforts, aid all young men connected with the Church, whom God might call to preach, and send them here, or to some good institution of learning, the call for pastors and missionaries would soon be met. Especially if the Church will pray the Lord of the harvest to send more laborers, and then sustain those who labor in the field, either as pastors or as missionaries, our Board of Missions would then have men and means to meet the Macedonian cry, coming up from every direction. The Board wish to take no young man away from any field, where he can be sustained: all the Board wish, is, to carry out, as fully as possible, the designs of the Church. Young men, coming up to Lebanon to prepare for the ministry, will not be influenced by the Board to leave the congregations and Presbyteries which

have sent them here, aiding them to come, and willing to sustain them on their return. But if Churches and Presbyteries will not aid them in coming, and not sustain them on their return, the Board would wish to aid, when it would be necessary and send to destitute parts.

The Church need not be afraid in sending her young ministers here to prepare for the work, that the Church here or the Board, will send them to other fields of labor, when they can be sustained by the country from which they come. We are workers together with God. The Lord, whose the field is, designs it should be cultivated; and our Church ought to labor to carry out his designs. Our beloved Church has not had much experience, either in aiding young men to obtain an education, or in supporting those who are laboring in the field. But she is improving in every respect, and we hope soon, she will practically know how to promote her own interest, by sustaining those who labor for her prosperity.

RELIGION OF THE BIBLE.

I APPROVE of the religion of the Bible, because it is just to God and safe to man; and it has more claims to our confidence and love, than any other,

from the fact that it has the strongest wisdom to sustain its claims, and the best object to warm the heart and sanctify the affections. The pardon it grants is full and free, and for Christ's sake, the image it restores to the heart, confirms the covenant. Faith enters into it as the seal of the Holy Spirit, and the earnest of the believer's inheritance: 'after that ye believed ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.' And the seal is to the day of redemption—until all the business of time is wound up. But there are many things connected with these great cardinal points of but small moment, about which Christians differ; yet, correct opinions, even in the smallest matters, are the best guardians of Christian morality and practical religion; and, therefore, should be sought after by all men who know and love the truth. The religion of the Bible binds us to God and one another—erroneous sentiments have a tendency to separate us from God and man. God is love, and he that loveth dwelleth in God and God in him: and he that loveth God, loveth him that is begotten of him.

I will here take the liberty to object to the opinions entertained by some professed Christians.—I object to any mode of Christian baptism being considered essential to Church membership, and communion at the Lord's table, from the following considerations:

1st. Because the Bible no where positively expresses the mode, and to entertain the sentiment,

that the mode is essential to Church-membership and Christian communion, is a postscript, or, adding to the word of God.

2nd. It confounds the mode with the thing done, and is calculated to establish a formal or external religion.

3rd. I object to the mode being essential, because it is contrary to experimental religion. Every Christian under the influence of first love, which is simple and sincere, loves all that love the Lord Jesus Christ; and could, without regard to modes or forms, meet them at the Lord's table. But the sentiment that makes the mode of baptism essential to communion, is contrary to Christian experience—not only the young, but old Christian—for whenever the Christian feels the love of God, he feels, also, love to the brethren, or all who have the divine image.

4th. I object to the sentiment, because it created schism in the body of Christ. Every Christian is a member of Christ's spiritual body; whether Jew or Gentile; if he believe in Christ, he is a member of his body. But he that makes the mode essential to Christian communion, cuts off from Christ some of the dear members of his body.

5th. I object to the sentiment, because it is destitute of Christian courtesy. The community that makes the mode of baptism essential to membership and communion at the Lord's table, do not inquire for testimonials of good behaviour, when they

receive members from other churches. A certificate of good standing in other churches, is of no value. This is contrary to Christian courtesy, and the courtesy of all associations; and it opens a door of retreat to all who wish to withdraw, to do so, without asking the body to which they belong for testimonials of their good standing in society.

COMMENT ON JUDE NINTH.

“YET Michael, the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.”

1. From the text, we learn, that devils are intelligent beings, and were made upright, but kept not their first estate.

2. They will contend with good and great angels, who have kept their first estate, and also with good men.

3. The subjects about which they dispute, are such things as are not clearly revealed in the Bible. Such things as are clearly revealed, can be easily sustained. The devils themselves, acknowledge Jesus Christ to be the Son of God.

4. Good angels and men leave God to be both Judge and Executioner.

Angels are intelligent beings: and falling from their first estate, do not lose their intellectual powers, but their good moral qualities. And although they are intelligent, they are intelligent devils—disposed to dethrone Jehovah, and deface his image in man, or wherever it is found. The devil is a tempter—a disputant—and, if he loves any thing, he loves sin—he loves to dispute—because, by disputation, he may put angels and good men off their guard, and lead them to usurp the throne of God, and take the reins of government into their own hands, and thus rebuke the devil—themselves not saying, The Lord rebuke thee.

But 2nd. The subjects of dispute are dark and uncertain things;—such as the body of Moses. Moses died in the land of Moab, and the Lord buried him in the valley; and no man knoweth of his sepulchre until this day. Had the children of Israel found his body, they would likely have worshipped it. The Lord acted wisely in concealing it; and are we not safe in saying, many other things are concealed from man, not essential to his salvation, which, if they had been plainly revealed, might have become objects of worship. The mode of water baptism, seems not to be plainly revealed. Baptism is enjoined, but the mode is not so clear. And on account of its obscurity, and not being essential to salvation, it is one of the best subjects

for the Devil to dispute about. The mode can't be settled by the Bible: and if it could, it would not save the sinner. But inasmuch as it is a Church ordinance—but its mode not known—it would do for devils to dispute about, and all such doubtful matters. The devil has much more to contend about. Clear important truths admit of but little contention. An old preacher once said in the pulpit, that he had often been asked about Pharaoh's chariot, and the sprinkled birds, but no one had ever asked him what it was to be born again.

But 3rd. Railing accusations- should not be brought against the Devil. It is true, that irony has been used by good men against bad men; and there are some vices, and perhaps some errors, which can only be put to the blush by ridicule. And there are some men who think they never have a powerful antagonist, unless he can rail and use as hard words as themselves. But Michael did not determine the subject by hard words, but left this dark and doubtful subject, and the sentence to be passed upon him, to the Lord. Michael was a good angel, and would not claim to be Judge and executioner. He was a holy angel, and would not sin so against God. He was a chaste angel, and could not pollute the language of heaven. He was a subordinate angel, and would leave all to God. He was a peaceable angel, and knew that railing was contrary to the Prince of Peace.

It may be that Michael was entrusted with the burial of Moses; and the Devil, who was once an angel of light, was well acquainted with him, condemned him for concealing the grave and body of Moses. He reasoned with Michael thus: It would be of great service to the children of Israel, to know where his body was;—and thus tried to get Michael to betray his trust. And when he would believe and obey God rather than submit to his reasoning, he had recourse to railing. This he could do as a devil. But although Michael could reason, he must not rail. In this, the Devil could excel Michael; but Michael submitted all to God. So, my brethren, let us do in all cases, when brought in contact with the Devil. I have seen much evil grow out of devils casting out devils. Whenever we attempt to cast out devils, let us do it by the finger of God

DEVILS CASTING OUT DEVILS.

NOT long since, reviewing the history of the world, a case came up, which transpired about eighteen hundred years ago, which interested me very much; and I thought I would give it to the world; and it possibly might illustrate some dark and difficult cases in the nineteenth century.

The case was this: One devil casting out another, I was much interested to learn his process, and see how he could accomplish his object, and how his process would result; and it turned out just like a devilish effort would do—both parties were injured. But the one that commenced the attack was the most injured. That you may see that the case I refer to was not fiction, see in the History of the World, Acts xix. 13–16: “Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them that had evil spirits, the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you, by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons, of one Seeva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil Spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil Spirit was, leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.”

I have observed, that in the process of one devil casting out another, he never attempts it as a devil, but always puts on another form—an angel of light; or, as in the case before us, the attack against the evil Spirit was made in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preached. He always goes masked: hence, he always attends masquerade parties and balls, and attempts but little, in this world, without a mask; but he is

still as much of a devil, when he goes in an angel's dress, and in the name of Christ, and his object is the same, as though he appeared in the Devil's livery; and, when he, in his angelic dress, opposes Christianity, he always calls Christ Beelzebub, and does not oppose him for a good work, but for blasphemy—he being a man, maketh himself a God. Just so, when he opposes the Church of Christ; he calls Christians hypocrites; and in his angelic dress, he is going to purge the Church of its hypocrites and false prophets; but, although he is thus dressed, he has the devil's spirit. Enmity is his nature, and his operations will show what spirit he is of. Satan cannot love, he hates morality; but never opposes it, until he gives it the name of vice, and then becomes the opposer of vice; but, by such a spirit as to open the very flood-gates of immorality upon the world; and the evil spirit he opposed in an angel's dress, leaps upon him, and overcomes his angel dress, and he shows himself all devil; then the people learn, when, perhaps, it is too late, that the devil was at the bottom of all: and, although it was his great zeal for religion and morality which led him to such action, yet, his course to stop it only opened the way to more immorality and irreligion. If he really appeared the devil opposing the devil, his kingdom would be divided, and could not stand; but he appears as an angel of light opposing the devil, and the

people are blinded by him; and too often join with him, and cry out, Come and see my zeal for the Lord of Hosts! when the spirit of the devil is in it. And the result is, when we oppose any thing under the name of evil, with an evil spirit, we are overcome by the evil spirit, and our professed Christianity is overcome, and we are found on the devil's side. With our professed zeal for literature, morality, and religion, we injure every thing good, and contribute to the devil's kingdom.

The devil is fond of excitement, and seems to impregnate the very air (for he is the prince and power of the air) with faction; and when the excitement abates, the feelings settle down in opposition to God and religion, and people become opposed to each other, and an unpleasant state of heart-burning is felt in society. The devil has his plan of bringing on his revivals, and he always commences more like an angel than a devil. He only whispers at first, and that prepares the way to talk confidentially, with promises to keep secret; but the secret keeper wants somebody else to help keep the secret; and some get it, who think the secret too good or bad to be kept, and it is no longer a secret: property is injured, society is injured, and perhaps the very one who rose up to cast out the devil is overcome, and suffers more than the one he attempted to cast out, as in the text before us: the evil spirit answers, "Jesus

I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" The excitement rises higher, and the last evil is worse than the first: the tide rises to the highest point, and then begins to abate. It began by evil imaginations, and rises to fixed hatred, and death is the finishing stroke.

Let us, my brethren, never attempt to cast out devils by Beelzebub, lest we be overcome by the very devils we oppose, and have to leave that house naked and wounded.

A SHORT SERMON FROM A LONG TEXT.

2 CHRON. xix. 5—7: "And he set judges in the land, throughout all the fenced cities of Judah, city by city; and said to the judges, Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgment. Wherefore now, let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts."

Our text develops the policy of Jehoshaphat, (under the Divine Hand,) the son of Asa: he set his heart to seek the Lord God of his father David,

and to bring Judah back to the service of the true God. He had riches and honor in abundance, and his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord. He sent heralds to make known the will of God to the people; but he found that mere declaration was not sufficient; judicial proceedings must be resorted to also. He therefore established two classes of judges: one ecclesiastic, the other civil. These judges or elders, were formed into three courts. The court of three, determined small matters; perhaps it was only a court of arbitration—each party choosing a judge, and they two chose a third. The second court consisted of twenty-three judges; this court determined matters of great moment. And the third court, or sanhedrim, consisted of seventy or seventy-two judges; this court determined matters of the highest character—both in Church and State.

No judge was allowed to receive presents, nor to regard men either for poverty or riches, or to follow a multitude, or be governed by public opinion; but according to law and evidence. No man was to be condemned unheard, nor on the testimony of less than two or three witnesses; some of them called of God, others elected by the people. Different manners obtained of making known the sentence. The Jews made the sentence known by declaring—thou art innocent or guilty; the Romans, by casting various tablets into a box—marked with *a.* for approval, and *c.* for condemna-

tion ; some of the Greeks, by giving a white stone as the emblem of innocence, and a black one as the emblem of guilt. See an allusion to this in Rev. ii. 17.

The Church has always had its ministers called of God, and its judicial courts. The Gospel Church has its courts of judges, ministers called of God, and elders chosen by the people. See 1 Cor. v. 12, 13. "For what have I to do to judge them also that are without ? Do not ye judge them that are within ? But them that are without God judgeth."

The power of a Church court is purely moral and spiritual. It is the duty of this court to maintain the purity and peace of the Church, and to labor for her prosperity ; and if any member of the Church has knowledge of any error or crime which ought to be noticed, let it be brought before this court, and not spread it abroad to the scandal of the Church : and he who will tell the faults of his brother to the world and not to the Church, lays himself liable to the censure of the Church. As God, therefore, calls men to preach, and also to rule in his house, we believe the policy is good in the government of the Church, to have its courts formed of men called of God, and men elected by the people, to act in concert with the ministry. The minister needs an advisory counsel, that is held responsible to the people for advice given. The preacher's business is with books, in his studio, in the pulpit, and in the domestic circle,

giving instruction and offering prayer, and has nothing, or little, to do with secular matters; and he needs advisors acquainted with the people in all their vocations of life, that in the government of a Church those who rule may be acquainted with all the circumstances of its members. If the preacher has to govern without an appointment by the people to aid him, he will have advisors; every member of the Church will advise—but who is responsible for that advice given. And if the counsel of brethren is not taken by the preacher, how many become offended that their sage advice was not taken? But when advice or counsel is given, or discipline carried out by members chosen by the people, they are held responsible to the Church who elected them to aid in forming a Church court, and giving advice and counsel to their minister: the Church court, then, being formed of men chosen of God to preach as well as administer government, and men chosen by the people, let all such courts, when assembled for judicial purposes, regard with deep interest the instructions given by God to these judges:—You must not condemn or cast a member out of the Church unheard, nor on the testimony of less than two or three witnesses. You must not receive presents to pervert judgment. Money may not be offered the judges; but perhaps that which may be better calculated to pervert judgment, great kindness may be shown by the different parties, with a view to blind the eyes. Gifts

of any kind must have no influence on the court; popular opinion, or the voice of the multitude, must not influence the court in its judicial proceedings; the sentiment should never be absent from the court, that it is to act in God's stead; every member of a Church court should lay his personal feelings and interest aside, and remember he judges for the Lord and not for man, and that God is with him in the judgment, and with the Lord there is no iniquity, nor taking of gifts. Members of Church courts should take good heed to act impartially, wisely, and justly, as they act for God who is with them in the judgment, and at whose bar they will soon appear.

May every court of Christ on earth be a holy court.

ON THE CONFESSION OF FAITH.

I HAVE read the discussion on faith and a revision of our book, and have thought it might be of some advantage to say what the fathers, and those who adopted it, thought and said when they adopted the Confession of Faith.

The framers of the book did not believe it perfect. They believed many words were retained in the compilation which might be construed by those

specially, who were trained up under the Westminster Confession as the most ultra sentiments of Calvinism; and they found it difficult to expunge every word from which might be inferred strong Calvinism, without making a new book entire. But they thought that if the body of the work fully expressed our views that those words and phrases more ambiguous, ought to be understood in consistency with the body or general tenor of the work: and under this conviction they left words which might have been expunged; and the book was unanimously adopted. The following may be clearly found in the Confession:

1st. That all men were chosen or elected to a day of grace or state of probation. None were reprobated from eternity.

2nd. That Jesus Christ is both God and man in two distinct natures, and person for ever.

3rd. That he, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man, and consequently for the whole world.

4th. That the Holy Spirit is sent to convince the whole world, that his operation on the human heart is as extensive as the atonement; and the atonement perfectly accords with the election to a day of mercy. God chose all men, Christ died for all men, and the Holy Ghost strives with all men. In the offices of the united three, there is no discrepancy.

5th. That Adam represented all his posterity,

and that his sin was imputed to his posterity, and that we are all guilty mortals and totally depraved. But the election gave all an opportunity to receive justification and salvation. The atonement constitutes the ground of the sinner's pardon. And the Holy Spirit, by his agency and means, instituted, controls, disposes and gives the sinner ability to do what he could not do without that influence. He, the sinner, is able to do two things, and they must be done in order to salvation. He must repent and believe the gospel. Faith and repentance go hand in hand, *only* faith takes the first step. He first believes that there is a God, that God is truly a holy God, and will punish the sinner. This is the grace of repentance in its first grade; the sinner can and ought to put forth the exercise; but when he has done all he can do in the way of repentance, he has not lessened his guilt in view of law; he must believe in Jesus Christ, or receive him, or commit the keeping of his soul to Christ. If he do not yield to the Spirit, he cannot repent; and if he do not repent he cannot believe; and if he do not believe he cannot be justified; and if not justified he must be damned.

The gospel, which is an economy of mercy, originated with God, and this makes it gracious; and it is carried out in man's agency, and this secures personal accountability.

In the Book we declare what God does, and then what man does. Salvation is an effect pro-

duced by a concurrency of both agencies. Then God begins and man must follow or yield.

I think the book fully gives our stand points, and by them doubtful words and ideas must be understood. I could write all day on this subject; but might darken counsel by words without knowledge.

EFFICIENCY IN THE CHURCH.

THE longer I live the more interest I feel for the Church of Christ. It has a great work to do. The Jewish Church has introduced the Saviour, who, by his death, has atoned for the sin of the world. It now belongs to the Christian Church to give publicity to what he has done, and spread his name abroad to the ends of the earth. I believe the Lord has raised up the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in this great valley, and in these ends of the earth, as a little missionary family, born in this field of missions to aid other Christian Churches in hastening that glorious day, when the world shall be filled with the glory of God. Perhaps no branch of Zion has superior advantages in the field of labor, and were her efficiency equal to her advantages, no Church could do more to promote the cause of Christ. The manner of her birth gives

her advantages ; she was born in a revival of religion, yet talked of as the great revival of eighteen hundred. She was born in this land of liberty, and is properly an American Church, if not the only one. The form of government she has adopted is not only congenial with our civil form, but the model from which it was drawn. Both preacher and people have a voice in the Church, from the lowest to the highest judicature ; her system of doctrines equally distant from the extremes of Theology so long taught in the world, and like a pendulum, finds its centre between the extremes of vibration, and being a medium system, it is more acceptable to the unbiased mind, and gives our Church doctrinal advantages no other enjoys. As relates to the terms of admission into the ministry, she thinks the Great Head of the Church, in constituting the ministerial body, has given a fair specimen. Paul, Apollos, and Cephas, learned, less learned and eloquent.

Her terms of Church-membership and communion. She considers Christian baptism an ordinance of the Church ; but makes a difference between the thing done and the mode of doing it. She would not make any mode of water baptism essential to membership in the Christian Church, or communion at the Lord's table. To make the mode a test of membership or communion, she thinks contrary to Christian experience and the religion of the Bible. Her constitution provides for

the pastoral relation, as well as the field of missions. She also has a Board of Foreign, as well as Domestic Missions, which promises much, though in its infancy. She may not have every rule or by-law to aid her in furthering the cause; but her constitution leaves an open door for every facility she may see proper to adopt. We ask, now, what is the great desideratum in our Church at the present time? We answer, efficiency, a consecrated laity and ministry. Our doctrines, government, and rules, will not build up the Church, nor be instrumental in the conversion of sinners, without efficient preachers and people. A preacher who, like the lazy dumb dog, neither barks nor bites, will not guard the house. Our Church needs, at the present time, devotion to the cause. The best constructed ship needs a captain; the best constructed engine needs an engineer; and the best Church constitution must be carried out by efficient men. Our Church has schools, colleges, and a prosperous University, with her other advantages. Let her awake from her slumber, and put on the whole armor of God. Let her use the advantages she has, and she will be a prosperous Church. I will conclude by saying, peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.

A VIEW OF THE PRESENT AND THE PAST.

In a Letter to a Friend in Lebanon.

THE children of Israel were directed to remember, all the way the Lord their God led them, with a view to excite humility and gratitude to God for his care over them. The Cumberland Presbyterian Church should never forget the way the Lord has led her, these thirty-six years past, and for ten years before, the miracles of grace wrought in the west which paved the way for her organization. I am now an old man. In 1798, I set out to seek the Lord. In November of 1800 I found him, the Lord God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and of great kindness. In the May of 1801, I connected with the Presbyterian Church. Great changes have taken place since that time. Then there was but one Presbyterian Church in the United States. Now there are Cumberland Presbyterians, Old and New School Presbyterians; and in forty-five years more, there may be many more branches of the Presbyterian Churches. Some steps have already been taken to found a Presbyterian Church North, on abolition principles. I hope, as I am an old Elder, and had to wade through difficulties, in the organization of the Cum-

berland Presbyterian Church, that the members, young members of this Church, will not stir up strife on that subject; and that we will all work together, and all work with God. And if other denominations will dispute, divide, and hinder the work of God, the brethren of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church will keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace.

Oh! what a change since 1810! Then there were but nine preachers in the whole body, four of whom only were ordained: all the preachers then could have been put into one pulpit, and nearly *all* the members into one house. But the Lord has greatly increased our infant Church. We should remember all the way the Lord our God has led us. Then we had no religious paper, no meeting-houses or but few, no institutions of learning, and not as many grammar books, as we now have colleges. Now, Dr. Cossitt, as you live away in that favored town, editing a religious paper, and in sight of the University, where so many young men are preparing for the ministry, some of them may in a short time come and preach away here, to the old Elder and the congregation in which he lives. Oh! he wants to hear some of them, whose tongues may be like the pen of a ready writer, whose heads may be fountains of waters, and whose hearts may be filled with love. Can't you talk to them and tell them what a great work they have to do, and how many advantages they have over the first young

men in the Church ? Tell them, if they will live humble and be useful, the Churches will be pleased with them and the institution, and will help to endow it. Tell them how some of us preached and wept, and prayed, before they went there. Old Brother Calhoun, I understand, lives not far from that place ; he will exhort them to diligence. And there is brothers Donnell, T. C. Anderson, and many others, who know the necessities of the Church, and will aid them in preparing for the important work. Tell the good people of Lebanon to take good care of the sons of the Church, pray for them and watch over them. Some of their fathers and mothers would not have sent them there, if they had not heard that there were many praying people in that place. That the young brethren there and every where else, preparing for the ministry, may shine as lights in the world, is my ardent desire and constant prayer.

A short history of our beloved Church may be profitable to all, and shall close this letter. The first Presbytery was constituted 4th of February, 1810, at Rev. Samuel McAdow's, Dixon county, Tenn., by Rev. S. McAdow, Finis Ewing, and Samuel King, all of whom have gone to their rewards. In April, 1813, two other Presbyteries were constituted: the Elk and Logan. These Presbyteries met the Cumberland, at the Beech meeting-house and constituted a Synod, on the 5th of October, 1813. Fasting and prayer, both public

and private, were common at that time. The 4th Monday in May, 1817, was observed as a day of fasting and prayer, for more laborers. The work of God greatly revived that year, and many laborers were called forth; and their circuits were their colleges. On the 4th Tuesday in May, 1820, the McGee Presbytery was constituted, in Missouri, then a territory. On the 18th of October, 1821, the Elk Presbytery was divided, and Alabama and Tennessee Presbyteries were ordered to be constituted. At this time also, the Anderson Presbytery was stricken off from the Logan; and Lebanon from the Nashville. On the 16th of October, 1822, Illinois Presbytery was stricken off from the Anderson and McGee Presbyteries. Since that time, many Presbyteries and Synods have been constituted: the number and brief history of which, together with the formation and history of our General Assembly, I may hereafter furnish, provided no other does so, and I have leisure. Many literary institutions of different grades have been established, and many periodicals, both weekly and monthly, are now published.

But I must close this interesting narrative. We ought to be humble and thankful as a Church, take encouragement and labor day and night; our work has just commenced.

COMMENT ON FIRST PETER IV. 12.

“BELOVED, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you.”

How common it is for Christians to think strange of their fiery trials, as though they had never heard of such things; and yet the Bible abounds with declarations of this character. “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution;” 2 Tim. iii. 12. And again: “These are they who have come through great tribulation,” &c. And have we espoused the cause of Christ, and yet think it strange that we have tribulation in the present world? The truth is every individual who espouses the cause of Christ, should calculate on wading deep waters, breasting heavy storms, and passing through the fiery darts of the wicked one. God tries his people to prove their faith and every grace: “the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth.” One of the primitive saints said, “I know that when I am tried, I shall come forth as gold.” But saints are sometimes tried not only to prove their sincerity, but to be an example to others. “Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of

the Lord," or the design he had in his afflictions. See how varied his trials, and how severe; one came and told him of what had befallen his children; another his camels; and before he was done speaking, another came with evil tidings about the sheep, &c., &c., until all he had was gone. So with good people in the present day. But should we think strange of it? Not at all. All these trials have befallen others, and can we expect to escape? If we are the heads of families, or the heads of any department, our messenger informs us one of the children is sick, or one of the house-hold servants is ready to die; your father is at the point of death; your mother cannot live long; the house is deranged, the stock is suffering, the farm is out of repair, the crop is burning up for the want of rain, or the flood is sweeping it away: but many of these are small, and common to all men. Deep interest is felt for the education of the children, schools are established, good teachers must be had, but there is want of union amongst the citizens. One wants this teacher, another that one; and other difficulties take place; union is dissolved and the institution broken up; the parents and guardians are afflicted; harmony is destroyed. But how many civil broils and political contentions! These all contribute to fill up the good man's cup. But here is the Church of God, preferred by the good man to his chief joy. Christians differ; and the fighting of Christ's sheep presages foul and stormy weather. Members of

the same congregation differ, and are cold-hearted to one another; the good man hears of one member walking disorderly; another has neglected the sanctuary; the prayer-meeting is cold and but thinly attended; but little attention to the Sabbath school; family prayer is neglected, perhaps by many; the preacher himself is cold and perhaps neglects his duty; the people think the preacher can get along better than they can; he has nothing to do but be religious, and we have so many troubles; we must attend to ourselves and let him do the best he can; he don't need our aid—not even our prayers. The good man is grieved; no revivals of religion—none enquiring the way to Zion; all the ways of Zion do mourn. A letter informs him a congregation has lost one of its most prominent lay-members; another informs him of the death of one of the most useful ministers; another minister has fallen a prey to temptation. All these things combine, with personal and inward evils, presumption, and despair, to afflict the pious heart. Satan tempts to distrust the faithfulness of God; one day I shall fall by the hand of my enemy. Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he, in anger, shut up his tender mercies? All these things, and others innumerable, and perhaps much greater, afflict the Christian. “But beloved, think it not strange.” Did you live in other parts of the world, your trials might have been as great or greater. Had you lived in David's day, and

been as good a man as he was, you would perhaps have had as severe trials. Had you lived in the days of the Saviour and his Apostles, your trials would have been more fiery. Had you lived in those days, one might have written to you, "many of the people say Jesus is mad and hath a devil; why hear ye him?" You would have heard one of his disciples had betrayed him, for thirty pieces of silver; another had denied him; and all the rest are flying from him. You would next have heard the boisterous crowd cry out, "Crucify him, Crucify him. He is not fit to live." Who is not fit to live? Your only Saviour, the meek and lowly Son of God. Oh! how would you have felt? You would have thought those fiery trials indeed. Many good men had all these fiery trials. Will you think your trials strange? But more. He is nailed to the cross; and the crowd laugh him to scorn; and at length the hope of Israel dies. The heavens are hung in mourning; the afflicted disciples say, one to another, "We trusted that it was he that should have redeemed Israel." But he is buried, a guard surrounds his dead body; the wicked are rejoicing; the Christians are all in trouble; some who thought their employment in future would be to preach him to the world, now talk about going back to their old employments. "I go a fishing," said one to his fellow. "I will also go with thee," said another. All was dark and gloomy; but the sorrow and silence of that last

long night, when the Saviour lay in the tomb, was broken by the descent of an angel; the stone was rolled back; the keepers became as dead men; and the hope of Israel rose triumphantly, and shouted victory over death. He gladdened the hearts of his friends with his bodily presence; but after a few short days, he stepped on a cloud, and was shouted welcome to heaven. But his Apostles go out to preach and plant Churches; the Holy Ghost descends; sinners attend their ministry. But learn the troubles of Paul, when Christianity was in its infancy. "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world;" and some who would once have plucked out their eyes for him, now become his enemies. Many went back from the Saviour, and walked no more with him. Many deserted the Apostles, "but they went out from us, because they were not of us." Had we, my brethren, lived then, our trials would have been greater than now. My dear brethren, of the 19th century, as God has told us in his word, that through much tribulation, we must enter the kingdom, and as Christ and all his followers in every age, have had tribulation, let us not think it strange that we are the subjects of fiery trials. But let us learn to glory in tribulation, and when we are tried we shall come forth as gold. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bearing his sheaves with him." Let us patiently bear the trials of life. The Saviour was

assailed by Satan, and he repelled him, and the angels came and ministered unto him. Let us resist evil spirits; and after we are tried, as individuals and as a Church, angels will minister to us. God will revive us again. He has set light over against darkness, joy over against sorrow. In the world ye shall have tribulation; "but be of good cheer," said Christ, "I have overcome the world."

Let us then, my Christian friends, sing with the poet, concerning the Saviour:

"His way was much rougher and darker than mine,
Did Jesus thus suffer, and shall I repine."

THE THEOLOGICAL CLASS AT LEBANON, TENN.

DEAR YOUNG BRETHREN—The close of the Collegiate Year of Cumberland University, is just at the door; the parting hour, at least for a time, is near at hand, when you must bid your brethren farewell; as you take your leave of the stately walls of your edifice; and the rooms in which so many useful lessons have been studied and recited, the President, Professors, and Tutors who have, with great interest, guarded the morals and aided the young men of the institution up the

hill of science, the pleasant town of Lebanon, its pleasant families and citizens, its Churches, prayer meetings, Sabbath Schools, and the public ministry of the word, with all the useful lectures which have been delivered to you. How solemn must your feelings be. Your faces are towards your father's house, or some distant field of labor, and you glance your eye back to the hallowed spot where your minds, under the tree of liberty, have been enlightened, and your hearts warmed while science and literature have opened their choice treasures; that same spot where not only the works of nature, but nature's God has revealed himself to some of you, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin. But once more, you think of the interesting Sabbath Schools you have, under God, built up in the surrounding country: will you return to water them, or will they be taken up by others, and sustained when you are gone? Should you never return to visit the schools you have planted, and the Churches you have watered in the neighborhood of Lebanon, you may, in some distant field, and after years have passed by, find some of those very Sabbath School boys able ministers, cultivating the waste places of Zion.

Many of you, we hope, will return to this favored spot, to prosecute your studies with double vigor, both of body and mind, and cultivate the little fields in which you have been laboring for some time

past. Others will never return; some will find soon their long home; some will be engaged in useful fields of labor employed as Teachers, Pastors and Missionaries. But while some, who are now here, will never return to the walls of the University; yet other young brethren from different parts, will come to fill their places. Brethren preparing for the ministry, from eight or nine different States, are here now: we hope more States will be represented here the next year, that Presbyteries will aid their candidates for the holy ministry to obtain an education here and elsewhere. We have no Theological Department endowed here or any where else in our Church; yet it is to be hoped, that as our infant and growing Church is so rapidly advancing in education, that some of its friends will voluntarily make donations to endow a Professorship in Theology, and that we may soon have a regular Department of Theology in the University.

My dear young brethren, let us live humble, humble, humble, wherever we go, and during the Vacation, by humility and zeal, according to knowledge, be the representatives of this Institution. Let the Church and the world see in your pulpit labors and private walk, that you are improved, intellectually, morally, and religiously, that you have not forgotten Zion. Never was there a time when our Church and the whole world needed more able ministers of the New

Testament. An open door is found almost every where for our ministers. The foreign as well as the domestic field, calls for laborers. May the Lord of the harvest call and qualify for the extensive field now ready to harvest, more laborers.

HE WAS A BURNING AND SHINING LIGHT.

THE anecdote of the preacher, who once thought loud preaching converted people, but afterwards learned that it was not the noise, but the light that produced the effect—not thunder but lightning—has gone the rounds of the papers. We fear that some who cannot speak loud, may glory in being luminous, because they do not speak loud, and therefore infer that, as they are not the thunder they must be the lightning. But if we judge from the effect of their preaching, they are neither lightning nor thunder; for lightning severs the stoutest tree, and is always followed by thunder. If therefore our preaching be true spiritual lightning, it will break the sinner's heart, and the report will be heard afar off.

But, we often glory in the sentiment which seems best calculated to promote our own glory,

and often overlook what best promotes the glory of God. Now, in order best to promote the divine glory, we must be burning, as well as shining and thundering preachers. John was a burning and shining light; and to be useful, we must burn as well as shine. A thundering preacher may affect the ear; a luminous preacher affect the eye; but it requires a burning preacher to affect the heart. Let us therefore, brethren, endeavor to be burning, as well as shining lights; and if we have the true spirit of burning in our preaching, we will warm the heart, enlighten the head, and secure to ourselves, as ministers, by the effects of our preaching, the title of sons of thunder.

ON FREE COMMUNION.

THE Lord's Supper was instituted for his followers, to be observed through all time, in remembrance of him.

The Church of Christ is divided into several members; but it is but one spiritual body, and Christ is the head. The members should have the same care, one of another, as the members of the natural body have; and if they do not all perform the same office, yet they should all subserve the interest of the same body.

But should Christians all commune together, at the Lord's Table? I answer, "What the Lord hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

We have now thirty States in our Union; they are all equally free and independent; and yet they are united and have one great central point, at which to meet and testify that they are free and independent States, and yet but one nation. The orthodox Churches should have one central point, at which to meet, and let the world know they are one; and let that be the Lord's table. Many arguments might be offered in favor of free communion. First, Christians all feel alike, if they do not think alike. They can preach together, pray together, sing together, and love together! Should they not commune together? I love the communion of Saints. And will not all meet at last in the same holy and happy land?

WHY DO WE SIT STILL?

LET every reader of this question answer. Has he a God to glorify, a God worthy of his warmest love, and who requires him to love him with all the heart, soul, strength and mind? Why does he sit still as though he had nothing to do?

Again, has he a soul to be saved, and is that soul

valuable? Did it come from the breath of God? Is it nourished by the breath of his lips? Was it redeemed by the blood of his Son, and for his happiness are his intercessions continuous; and when he yields to the spirit, the Holy Spirit of God, does it enlighten, convince, and persuade him to repent and turn to God? And why does he sit still? Do angels keep their watchful stations around him, and in his most insensible hours are there angels awake and hovering over him to arouse him to effort, and why does he sit still? The Church of God has important work to do; she has much to do on the defensive and she ought to be progressive as well as aggressive in her operations, and why does she sit still? The world is to be converted by her instrumentality, and she is to appear before the throne of God and praise him day and night in his temple; and why does she sit still?

The world is convulsed, thrones, principalities, and powers are falling to the ground, and a crisis has come up in its history calculated to awaken all men, and why do we sit still? The agriculturist, the mechanic, the merchant, the lawyer, the politician, are all up and at work to secure what will soon be wrapped in flames, and why do we sit still and neglect the one thing needful? The veriest sinner on earth is rapidly advancing to the gate of death, his day of mercy does not stop in its motion, and his judgment does not linger, and his damnation does not slumber, and why does he sit

still? Let us, my brethren and friends, awake from our slumbering, and prepare to see a world on fire and a God in grandeur.

SIN AND HOLINESS.

SOME years ago I read an author, who advanced the idea that holiness could not be developed to created intelligences without the existence of sin; and as God designed to develop his holiness, it was necessary, in that development, to create intelligent beings, and place them under a constitution which would be necessarily followed with the introduction of moral evil or sin, into the universe. That the introduction of sin necessarily had the greatest good in it, because it gave the Creator an opportunity to make known his perfections. I was astonished at the logic as well as the theology, and was compelled to call the logic sophistry, and the theology heresy. I had thought, and still think, the negative is known by the positive, the finite by the infinite, falsehood by truth; and that truth could exist of itself, and be known by its own infinite excellence, and so to speak is older than falsehood; and so with all the perfections of the Deity. Holiness is the infinite, sin is the finite; holiness can exist and be known to intelligent beings,

without sin ; but sin cannot exist or be known without holiness : holiness is therefore the infinite, sin is the finite ; holiness has the greatest good in it, sin has the greatest evil. Might not the writer as well have said, God cannot exist without a Devil, or make himself known without an evil being ; and as God desired to be known, he must first, if he be first decree the medium to make himself known, and bring into existence devils and wicked men. To make holiness dependent on sin, either in its nature or development, is to place sin as the infinite and holiness as the finite ; sin immutable, holiness immutable ; the Devil as self-existent, and God dependent.

The theology is heresy ; it makes the Devil the Lord's counsellor. But the Lord asks the question, who has been his counsellor ? was a devil necessary to make known his glory ? Or was he dependent on sin to make known his perfections ? If so, he is not self-existent nor independent. The theology is not good, it contradicts the Bible, and the Bible is the standard of orthodoxy.

WHEN MAY WE KNOW AN ENEMY OR FRIEND ?

If we wish to know whether our fellowmen are our friends or foes, let us observe the following rules :
—Circumstances will develop the true feelings of

the heart. When we are in health and prosperity we are likely to find a professed friend in every person; but wait until adversity overtakes, and then you will find that the true, sincere-hearted friend will stick closer to you than before; and the heart of an enemy will discover his opposition—he has been watching for your halting, and will always try to overtake you between the straits. This rule will apply to the whole as well as its parts: it will apply to the Church as well as the world. How many seem to be friends in Zion's prosperity; but let an evil day come upon the Church—or a Church—and then their true character is known; their poisoned arrows are now hurled with fury at the Church, and every advantage is taken of her affliction; some are for leaving the Church in her adversity, who were her professed friends in prosperity. Circumstances make great men; and circumstances develop the true state of the heart. To forsake a friend in adversity argues a want of true friendship. Flavel, in his "Nature Spiritualized," very strikingly expresses this sentiment.

"Meditation 4th—*Upon a withered posy taken up in the way*—Finding in my walk a posy of once sweet and fragrant, but now dry and withered flowers, which I suppose to be thrown away by one that had formerly worn it; thus, said I, doth the unfaithful world use its friends when Providence hath blasted and withered them. Whilst they are rich and honorable, they will put them into their

bosoms, as the owner of this posy did whilst it was fresh and fragrant ; and as easily throw them away, as useless and worthless things, when thus they come to be withered. Such usage as this Petronius long since complained of :

“Are they in honor ? Then we smile like friends ;
And with their fortunes, all our friendship ends.”

But this loose and deceitful friend stinks so odiously in the very nostrils of nature, that a heathen poet severely taxes and condemns it as most unworthy of a man :

“’Tis base to change with fortune, and deny
A faithful friend, because in poverty.”

And is this indeed the friendship of the world ? Doth it thus use them whom it once honored ? Then, Lord, let me never seek its friendship. Oh ! let me esteem the smiles and honors of men less, and thy love and favor more ! Thy love is indeed unchangeable ; being pure, free, and built upon nothing that is mutable ! Thou never servest thy friends as the world doth its darlings.”

Our venerable and highly respected John Flavel, who wrote some two hundred years ago, understood the Bible and the human family, and it was then pretty much the same as it is now, if improvements have been made since. Yet still the friendship of the world is enmity with God. Let us depend less upon the world and more upon God, who is unchangeable, true, and good.

WHO IS IN THE FAULT?

WHEN persons differ, the enquiry is often made—Who is in the fault? We answer: That person who is hardest to be won. The person who is not in the fault, is willing to have the matter investigated, and desires reconciliation; but the offender is unwilling to be reconciled, because he knows he would have to acknowledge his fault, and not being willing to confess his fault, he will be the last to seek a reconciliation. We ought all to try ourselves by this rule when we are at variance with others. Some men think the offended ought always to wait until the offender acknowledges his fault, but the sentiment is not correct. Had God waited, when man offended, for him to acknowledge, no reconciliation would have been sought. But the offended God was first to seek friendship with offending man, and by His condescension, many have become reconciled to God; goodness leadeth to repentance. We love Him because He first loved us. Christians must copy his example.

ON BUILDING CHURCHES.

I HAVE just returned to my charge, after an absence of six weeks; during which time I visited several congregations and aided in the dedicational services of a new Church, at Elkton, Giles county, Tenn. The great Head of the Church seemed to approve the dedication; a seriousness prevailed amongst all the people, and some three or four professed religion during the occasion. The old saying is pretty true, we judge the state of the people by the state of the temple. Man is a religious being; all nations have their gods, and have built temples in which to worship their several divinities. In this land of Bibles we are taught to worship the true God, the God of the Bible; but, alas! how indifferent are many professed Christians and Christian ministers about the Lord's house. Some claiming to be Christians have no house at all, and others who have houses of worship, allow them to be so badly constructed and meanly kept, that the worshippers must have a gross idea of the God worshipped there. They have no sexton, but little light and less heat, and but few worshippers; and some of them seem to love the creature more than the Creator. But notwithstanding there is so little attention among the people to Church building,

Church keeping, and Church going, many of the preachers are more delinquent than the people. There are but too many preachers, and perhaps some of them growing old, who have never aided in building a house for God or even planting a Church. They are waiting for others to plant Churches, build houses and secure them a good salary; and then they will water those congregations and occupy those pulpits ready furnished to their hands.

Will my brethren in the ministry suffer the word of exhortation? Let us turn our attention to the waste places of Zion as well as to the wilderness; plant Churches, build and rebuild houses of worship, and be faithful in our attention to them, and see what the Lord will do for us this year. Would every preacher in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church plant one Church and build one meeting-house this year, there would be more than one thousand congregations organized and the same number of Church houses built in our branch of Zion, in the year 1849, and more than double that number of souls saved. Brethren, let us try, let us begin the year with God and his cause, relying on his promises, and see if he will not pour us out such a blessing that there will not be room enough to contain it.

CHURCH BUSINESS.

THE fall sessions of the Presbytery is at hand ; much business ought to be attended to ; theological schools must be acted on and reported to the committee appointed by the last General Assembly of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. (See Minutes of the last Assembly.) Every Presbytery, according to the constitution of the Church, should have one or more missionaries constantly employed in its bounds ; and would it not be good policy for every Synod to have at least one missionary constantly employed in its bounds, to learn its destitutions, as well as to stir up its ministers and Churches to a faithful discharge of duty, and report the condition of the whole field, and secure laborers, if possible, to occupy the whole ground.

This article is not designed to argue the importance of such measures, but to bring the matter up before the Presbyteries ; though we could fill our mouth with arguments.

Let every Presbytery call for volunteers to take the circuit, and if they cannot be had, draft a sufficient supply ; and let each Presbytery feel it must be done. This is the way we used to feel when the work of God and the worth of souls lay near our hearts. We have a good constitution,

providing for the Churches, both missionaries and pastors; and we now have a Board of Foreign and Domestic Missions. Our system is good in its great outlines, and the business of the Church now is, to fill up those outlines by having efficient pastors, missionaries, and agents, to carry out the measures. No system, however good, will succeed well, unless there is efficiency to carry out the plan. And next, the people must help sustain and patronize pastors, circuit riders, and aid the agents of the Missionary Board. The people may be faulty in this matter and not patronize as they should, but the fault in fact, of their delinquency is the preacher's, because he does not teach them that the workman is worthy of his meat. Some preachers may teach the people they must support them because they are needy; but perhaps never touch the broad principle that the workman is worthy of his meat, that every man ought to be rewarded according to his own work. This is the principle the Judge of quick and dead will regard at the last day; let us regard it in the Church.

Brother Editor, as long smooth articles are seldom read, we hope this short one will be read by all, and that the judicatories of the Church will not let their doctrines and plan of operations be lost for want of energy. "A good foundation may be laid for a building, but through much weariness the building may decay, and through idleness of the hands, the house droppeth through."—Solomon.

Perhaps you may hear from me again on this subject ; we would be glad if an abler hand would take hold of this subject, whether the fault lies in the constitution or in the men into whose hands it has fallen, and who solemnly bound themselves to see the constitution and government of the Church carried out.

CLAIMS OF THE DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS.

My attention has been called of late to the claims of different sectaries, claiming to be Christians, who speak of themselves as the Church, and denounce all others as heretics. I have been led to examine their claims to such high authority, and I cannot see, either in their organization or character, anything that would justify such high claims.

The first that I shall notice, claiming to be the Church of Christ, exclusively, is that sectary, called by some Christians, by others Reformers, and by others Campbellites. The distinctive peculiarity which constitutes them the Church, is the doctrine of baptism, by immersion, for the remission of sins. This method of salvation, they say, commenced on the day of Pentecost, and ever since that day, no one can be saved without

immersion for the remission of sins; and only such as hold that doctrine, can claim to be the Church. They do not say that this was always God's method of salvation, but only since the day of Pentecost.

Now, I will set up the ark of God against this dogma: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins," Acts x, 43. God has revealed but one method of saving sinners, and that is by faith in Jesus Christ. The claims of that people, therefore, who say they are the Church, is founded on a dangerous innovation; but examine their Christian morality, their observance of the Sabbath, &c., and see if they have higher claims to *the* Church, than all others.

The next that I shall notice is the Baptist denomination. They claim to be *the* Church, the only Church of Christ, on earth, and this claim is founded on believers being baptized by immersion; and, although they denounce the Reformers as heretics, and will not commune with them because they are not the Church, they denounce all others, who, notwithstanding they are orthodox in everything but the mode of baptism, as not being the Church. What, then, is the great distinguishing doctrine that gives them the right to call themselves *the* Church? Is it not water baptism, by immersion? May we not here set up the ark of God beside this dogma? Gal. vi, 15: "For in Christ Jesus,

neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."

Again: "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." We ask whether their Christian morality gives them a greater right to be *the* Church? This, they do not claim, and others may not award it to them.

The third denomination claiming to be *the only* Church of Christ on earth, is the Episcopalians; this claim is founded on Apostolic succession. They can trace their Church, by regular succession, to the Apostles; they are the Church, the only Church; and they are more consistent than some others, who, while they claim to be the only Church, and will not commune with others, will, nevertheless, preach, sing, and pray with them. The Episcopalians will do neither. To co-operate with other Christians in religious worship, would be to acknowledge them as belonging to the only Church. Now, in running back to the Apostles, do they not contradict them? 1 Cor. xiv, 34: "Let your women keep silence in the Churches." Can it be a regular succession from the Apostles, to come down to us through a civil king or priest, whether religious or irreligious? Did not Elizabeth claim to direct the Church? And did not Paul forbid women to control the Church?

But let us next inquire into the religious character of that people, and learn whether their

Christian morality authorizes them to say, "Stand by thyself—we are more holy than thou."

The fourth sectary I shall notice, claiming to be the only Church of Christ on earth, is the Roman Catholics. This caps the climax. Infallibility is professed by them; and they only have the keys of the Kingdom. These keys were given to Peter, by the Saviour, and handed down by him, to the middle of the 19th century. But Peter claimed no more than the other Apostles, the Elders, &c. He exhorts, but does not command. See 1 Pet. v, 1.

But, in conclusion, what is the Christian morality of that Church? Let its bloody history answer the question.

PERSECUTION HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL.

Acts viii, 1, 2, 3, 4: "AND Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the Church which was at Jerusalem: and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the Apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havoc of the Church, entering into every house, and haling

men and women, committed them to prison. Therefore, they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word."

May the persecutions of the present time be followed with like effects.

Ministers of the gospel are laborers with God.

It is now time, high time, dear brethren in the ministry, to awake out of sleep; and particularly preachers of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. A crisis has come up in the history of the world, and particularly in our Church, which calls for ministers that will not hold their peace, day nor night; men who will lift up their voice like a trumpet, and show the house of Israel their sins. Brethren, we have a great work to do, and we ought to be prepared for it and at our work. Personal piety is called for at the present time, and without it, the preacher, though he had the tongue of an angel, can do but little, if any good.

Secondly—He must be consecrated to his work: he must feel himself not his own, and must be entirely devoted to the work of the Lord; both as Pastor and Missionary.

The Lord Jesus, the Captain of our Salvation, calls to arms!—to the field of battle!

"To arms!—to arms!—I hear him cry!

'Tis yours to conquer or to die."

To those who have no stated charges let me say, Can you not take the field this year, and

travel through the Churches, two and two, and hold protracted meetings in the most needy places—cities, towns, villages, and country places. We need not expect the Church to arise and shake herself from the dust, until her ministers get up into the high mountains, and their voices are heard. “Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make the paths straight.”

It is the preacher's duty, instrumentally, to enlighten and warm the Church; the Church needs to be enlightened in the duty of prayer, and in the duty of supporting the Gospel; but the preacher must not sit still until the people awake. He must tell them their duty by doing his own. We will never see better times until the watchmen are awake, and crying aloud—not regarding their lives—to supply the great lack of service in the Church.

My brethren in the ministry, bear with me; an old man feels great interest for the present generation, as well as for every one that is to come. Can he sit still while he can move a muscle; or has a soul to see and feel the destitutions of Zion? Can he fold his hands in view of her troubles? He cannot—but must exclaim in the language of good Jeremiah, “Oh! that my head were water, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people.” Oh! if he could see all his younger brethren out in the field, and the Church sustaining

them in their labor, he could rejoice! for he would believe God would again revive his work; and then, like an old Simeon, he would say, "Let thy servant depart in peace, for my eyes have seen thy salvation."

Oh! it is important we should feel the worth of souls, and the word of the Lord like fire shut up in our bones. Bear with me, my brethren, the love of Christ constraineth me; his benevolence should move us to feel and act, and to devote our lives to his service.

I heard a preacher say once, that he never lacked, when he was devoted to the Lord's work. If the people will not do their duty, the blessing will return into your own bosoms. God will not send you a warfare at your own charges; He will provide, whether the people will feed you or not. But the people will sustain you; and many, who are not members of the Church, will help you, when they see you devoted to the Lord's work.

We should awake, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand! There is a better day coming, and it is not far distant! Let us not "be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

"The reaping time will surely come,
And angels shout the harvest home."

BE PATIENT IN TRIBULATION.

ROMANS XII. 12.

ON this subject I wish to offer a few thoughts, it is designed for practical use.

For a Christian to be calm and serene on a smooth surface, is no great evidence of superior attainments; but to be patient in trouble, calm on a rough sea and unshaken in the storm, evinces superior attainments in the Christian graces. This is a troublesome world, and he who would pass through it comfortably, must be patient. Patience, as explained by one, is that calm and unruffled temper with which a good man bears the evils of life. It may be supposed that it only belongs to the afflicted to exercise patience; but neither health nor prosperity can be enjoyed without it. Patience is, as all other graces are, of an humble character; but does not alone belong to humble life: it belongs to the most dignified and the most exalted station; it is essential to our happiness in every condition in life.

While the Christian is in this world, he has trouble on every hand; without are fightings, within are fears; the world, the flesh, and the devil, are all combined against him. The devil will try us by presumption and despair; the world will try us by wealth, honor, and pleasure; the flesh will try

us by the pleasures of the eye and the pride of life : it seems to be a part of the Christian's legacy in the present world—they who enter heaven do it through great tribulation. As therefore the Christian must have tribulation, he ought to arm himself with the whole armor of God, that he may be able to stand against all the wiles of the devil ; but let him be armed as he may, he must let patience have her perfect work. As we must have trouble in the present world, and patience is essential to our happiness, we will offer a few arguments to excite the Christian to be patient in tribulation.

And 1st. He should be patient in tribulation, because God has enjoined it in his word ; had he not considered it necessary to our happiness in the present world, he would not have required it.

2nd. God himself is a God of patience : see Rom. xv. 5. If God, in the management of his affairs, exercises patience, we should be patient.

3rd. The example of Christ ; and the most pious men in the world were patient. The Saviour was patient—he opened not his mouth ; when reviled he reviled not again : the prophet Isaiah describes him thus—“ We shall not fail nor be discouraged until he set judgment in the earth.” You have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, in permitting his afflictions, &c.

4th. The circumstances of life require patience ; we need the exercise of patience from others toward us ; and we must exercise patience towards

others. "Patience," says Mr. Jay, "must be displayed under provocations; our opinions, reputations, connections, offices, and business, render us widely vulnerable. The characters of men are various; their pursuits and interests perpetually clash. Some try us by their ignorance, some by their folly, some by their perverseness, some by their malice. Here then is an opportunity for the triumph of patience. We are very susceptible of irritation; anger is eloquent, revenge is sweet; but to stand calm and collected, to suspend the blow which passion was urgent to strike, to drive the reasons of clemency as far as they will go, to bring forward fairly in view, the circumstances of mitigation, to distinguish between surprise and deliberation, infirmity and crime; or, if infliction be deemed necessary, to leave God to be both judge and executioner. This a Christian should labor after." "He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding; but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly."

5th. We should be patient in trouble, for patience worketh experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.

Patience in trouble will renew our strength; the working hand is the strong hand; the deep-rooted tree is the one that has had its top shaken oftenest and hardest; the most skillful mariner has sailed on the roughest seas. It is given to the

Christian, not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake; and present sufferings for Christ's sake, peaceably borne, will work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. If patience under suffering will promote our eternal happiness, then let the Christian be patient in tribulation.

REVIVALS.—GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

AFTER long seeming neglect, I send you this epistle. I have had but little opportunity of writing, for months past; have been visiting the Churches to see how they do, and have but seldom preached twice in the same congregation. Although I have been pretty constantly at work in the Lord's vineyard, little fruit yet appears; but the plowman plows in hope, and finally is a partaker of his hope: so we ought to labor in the Lord's field, and, by the blessing of God, will reap the fruit of our labor.

I learn from the Banner and other sources, that many changes have taken place in Lebanon, since I left; some citizens, devoted to the interests of Zion, have been carried by angels to Abraham's bosom; and others are waiting the signal to fly away and be at rest. A revival has been realized

again, in our dear Lebanon; many have been brought from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God; many, whose names have been inscribed in the family record, are now enrolled in the Lamb's book of life, which will be read at the last day, the day of judgment.

Much good seed has been sown in Lebanon; have tares sprung up? An enemy hath done this. Are some good people ready to pull up the tares? Let both grow together till the harvest; let angels, by the direction of the Head of the Church, gather them together to be burned, and gather the wheat into the garner. Unskillful hands and unsanctified hearts, are not prepared to pull up even the tares; they do not know the heart, and might pull up the true saint. Judge nothing before the time. Religious excitement requires divine skill to direct. Uzza's hand touching the ark, may displease the Lord. Troubled water requires a skillful pilot. May the excitement at Lebanon, of whatever kind settle down in a calm of love to God and man.

Although I was not at the last General Assembly of our Church, yet I was pleased to read its journals. The Report of the Board of Missions greatly interested me; and although its doings may seem like a very small pebble thrown into the sea, its little waves may increase, and reach the distant shore. May many hearts be stirred up to sustain the cause of missions.

The Board of Publication is destined, under the blessing of God, to preach Christ to every family. May it always have warm, practical friends.

Theological institutions interested the Assembly, and the subject was discussed; and although but little was done, yet that little stone may become a mountain, and all our ministers may have an opportunity of theological as well as literary training. The door is now open, and the way prepared to take action on a very important point, the endowment.

Brother Cossitt, I wrote you and other brethren, during the sitting of the Assembly, but my letters did not reach in time, on another subject; which has interested me, and on which I would have been glad if the Assembly had taken some favorable action. The celebration of the Semi-Centennial Anniversary of the great revival of 1800, which gave birth to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, (an American Church, a revival Church) and which also gave rise to many valuable institutions; and since which time many have gone forth, and knowledge has increased. This subject may be acted on at the next Assembly, but it should be thought of, and prayed over, before hand. I would be pleased, could the Celebration be on the day the meeting commenced, when the work developed itself so powerfully.

Will our Assembly, at its next meeting, which will be not far from where the revival commenced,

recommend that protracted or camp meetings be held in all our Churches, at that time, commencing with fasting and prayer?

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

JESUS CHRIST has promised, that where two or three are gathered together in his name, he will be in the midst of them.

Now, if two or three Christians, and members of a Church, are thrown together in the same neighborhood, town, or city, ought they not to unite together, in some religious form, to promote their own spiritual interest, and the interest of the Church; and command all the means in their power to promote the Saviour's cause? and where can two or three be thrown together in this world, without some means, and sufficient means, to promote their own good, and the good of others, if they would only use those means? Can they not meet, and speak one to another? Can they not pray and sing together? Can they not have Sabbath Schools; and, if they have no preacher, can they not try to get one? And can they not exhort one another; and, if they use all the means in their power, cannot two or three build up a Church? And will not Christ be in the midst

of them, and bless them; and as they prosper, can they not build a good house of worship? And can they not secure, and sustain, a pastor or missionary? And when they are all at work, and always at work, working with God, and working with one another, can such a Church die? The candle-stick has never been removed, except from the negligent and slothful!

By religious industry and economy, they will secure the confidence and aid of others; but who can have confidence; and who will aid a few or many, when they will not help themselves, and take care of what aid is afforded them? And are not two or three, or a large congregation criminal, who have means at hand, and will not command or use the means to sustain themselves and build up the Church.

A

BRIEF HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF THE

CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

IN giving a succinct account of the origin and progress of this infant branch of Zion, I will observe, in the first place, that the revival of religion in the Presbyterian Church, out of which Cumberland Presbyterians sprang, was brought about by the ordinary means, though used in an *extraordinary* way.

The Rev. JAMES M'GREADY,* with a few other individuals of Logan County, Kentucky, near the close of the last century, began, like the remnant of Israel in the days of Ahab, to mourn over the desolations of Zion. At length they drew up, and adopted, the following preamble and covenant:—

“When we consider the word and promises of a compassionate God, to the poor lost family of Adam, we find the strongest encouragement for Christians to pray in faith—to ask, in the name of Jesus, for the conversion of

* It was under the preaching of this venerable Father in Israel, that the work of God first appeared in Kentucky.

their fellow men. None ever went to Christ when on earth, with the case of their friends, that were denied; and, although the days of his humiliation are ended, yet, for the encouragement of his people, he has left it on record, that where two or three agree, upon earth, to ask in prayer, *believing*, it shall be done. Again: *whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son*. With these promises before us, we feel encouraged to unite our supplications to a prayer-hearing God, for the outpouring of his spirit, that his people may be quickened and comforted, and that our children, and sinners generally, may be converted. Therefore, we bind ourselves to observe the third Saturday of each month, for one year, as a day of fasting and prayer, for the conversion of sinners in Logan County and throughout the world. We also engage to spend one half hour every Saturday evening, beginning at the setting of the sun, and one half hour every Sabbath morning, at the rising of the sun, in pleading with God to revive his work."

The Great Head of the Church evidently owned and blessed this extraordinary effort, and soon commenced a powerful revival of religion, in the bounds of the Transylvania Presbytery. This Presbytery was divided in 1802, by the Synod of Kentucky, and the Cumberland Presbytery formed, including most of the preachers that had been active in promoting the revival, and embracing many of the societies that had been converted and organized after the revival commenced. The measures adopted for the purpose of perpetuating and extending this glorious work of God, and for the purpose of supplying newly-organized congregations with preaching, soon incurred the displeasure of the Synod, which will appear in the following letter:—

CIRCULAR LETTER,

Addressed to the Societies and Brethren of the Presbyterian Church, recently under the care of the Council, by the late Cumberland Presbytery; in which there is a correct statement of the origin, progress, and termination, of the difference between the Synod of Kentucky, and the former Presbytery of Cumberland.

DEAR BRETHREN—The time is at last come, when we must either sacrifice our religious liberties and conscience, to what we judge unreasonable demands, cease our endeavors to promote the work of God among you, as we have hitherto done, or constitute a Presbytery separate from the Synod of Kentucky. We choose the latter as the only alternative, in which we can have the answer of a good conscience. We therefore deem it expedient to give you a retrospective view of the cause, together with the progressive means, by which matters have been brought to this issue.

A number of you will easily recollect, that about the close of the last century, or beginning of the present, God, in a very remarkable manner, began to revive his work amongst the inhabitants of this western country. The first symptoms of which, appeared under the ministerial labors of the REV. JAMES M'GREADY, in Logan County. At the first commencement of this glorious revival, as also in its progress, the bodily affections and exercises of a number of those who were its subjects, were very uncommon. This soon caused a rumor to go abroad, and the people from every quarter *come out to see*. The consequence of which was, they not only had their curiosity satisfied, but a great number had their hearts deeply affected. This, in the hand of God, was a blessed means

of spreading the work through various parts of our country. For a while, at first, all the ministers in our bounds, seemed to participate in the glorious effusion of the Holy Spirit, and correspondent to this, proclaimed themselves friends to the REVIVAL. But, alas! it was soon after discoverable, that some of them had changed their opinion, otherwise they had never been well established. The consequence of this apparent change may easily be inferred; notwithstanding the work still progressed. And although the few who remained friends to the revival, labored in the work of the ministry *night and day*, yet the cries of the people for more preaching were incessant; and those cries soon became so general, that they were heard from many parts of an extensive frontier. The ministers, in return, could only pity, and pray for them; the congregations being so numerous, and in such a scattered situation, that they could not, by any possible endeavor, supply them.

About this time, a venerable father in the ministry,* who was then resident in one of the upper counties of Kentucky, came down and attended a communion with some of our preachers in a vacant congregation: and he, having learned the situation of our country, and the pressing demand that there was for more preaching, proposed the plan of encouraging such amongst us, as appeared to be men of good talents, and who also discovered a disposition to exercise their gifts in a public way, to preach the gospel, although they might not have acquired that degree of human education, which the letter of discipline requires. This proposition was truly pleasing to our preachers; and, indeed, it found general acceptance amongst the people, as soon as intimations thereof were given. The consequence was, an uncommon spirit of

*REV. DAVID RICE

prayer now seemed to prevail throughout the societies, that the great Head of the Church would, not only open an effectual door into the ministry, but also that he would raise up, qualify, and bring men into that sacred office, whose labors he would own and bless. And, brethren, that God who never told *Israel to seek him in vain*, evidently heard and answered the prayers of his people. Some, whose minds had been previously impressed with the duty of calling sinners to repentance, and of bearing public testimony to the work of God and the religion of Jesus Christ, and upon whom, also, the eyes of the Church, for some time, had been fixed with a degree of expectation, now made their exercise of mind on this subject, known to their Fathers in the ministry. The prospect was truly pleasing to the preachers, yet they considered it expedient to act with the greatest caution: for although the step about to be taken, was not unprecedented in the Presbyterian Church, yet, seeing it was out of the common track, they were well aware, that some of their brethren in the ministry would oppose the measure. However, they ventured to encourage three or four of the young men to prepare written discourses, and present them to the Transylvania Presbytery as a specimen of their abilities. They accordingly prepared discourses, and at the next stated session of said Presbytery, their case was brought before that reverend body. They met with warm opposition, arising principally, however, from a quarter rather inimical to the revival. But after a lengthy conversation on the subject, in which there was much altercation, a majority of the members consented and agreed, that the young men might be permitted to read their discourses to an aged member alone, who should make report to the Judicature. We believe the report was favorable. It was then directed, as well as we can recollect, that

those men should prepare other discourses to be read at the next Presbytery. They accordingly prepared, and three of them attended ; but, as soon as the subject of their case was resumed, a warm debate ensued. At length, however, a majority of the members agreed to hear their discourses. After they were read, the question was put : " Shall these men be received as candidates for the ministry ? " The vote being taken, one of the three was received, and two rejected by a majority of one vote only. This circumstance much depressed the spirits of a number of the preachers, who were real friends to the revival, and likewise the congregations generally, who had so earnestly desired their licensure, but more especially the spirits of those two candidates were depressed. They were men in a matrimonial state, and could not consistently with those relative duties, by which they were bound to their families, go and acquire the knowledge of all those forms of literature required by the book of discipline. Fain would they have returned home, and solaced themselves in the enjoyment of their domestic comforts, as private Christians, if they could have done so, and kept a good conscience : but this they could not do ; nor could they with clearness become members of any other Christian society, where the ministerial door was not so strait and difficult, and consequently, where they might have been at liberty to exercise their popular talents with approbation. No : they were attached to all the essential doctrines, and likewise the discipline of the Presbyterian Church. It was in this Church they were early dedicated to God by their parents, and in this Church they first felt the power of the gospel upon their hearts, and tasted the sweetness of that grace, which brings salvation to man. Therefore in the communion of this Church they earnestly desired to live and die.

By this time a number of others, who were generally

esteemed eminent for gifts and piety, together with those who had already offered as candidates, became solemnly impressed to proclaim the word of life and salvation to sinners. But alas! the door of admittance seemed to be shut against them.

In this dark state of matters, both the ministers themselves, and likewise the candidates who had already offered, and others who were looking forward towards the ministry, together with all the societies in our bounds, began now, in good earnest, to realize the necessity of crying mightily to that God, who has Church judicatures in his hands, as well as the hearts of individuals. In the meantime, candidates, and other eminent characters, who were assiduously endeavoring in one way or another to promote the work of God, were encouraged by their fathers in the ministry to continue to their gifts in a way of public exhortation, which several of them did, laboring much till the next Presbytery, at which time several petitions were presented with hundreds of signatures, praying the Presbytery to license and send to their relief certain denominated persons. The subject was again taken into consideration, after which the Presbytery that was personally acquainted with those men embraced in the petitions, knowing their piety, soundness in the faith, *aptness to teach*, &c., and taking into view the situation of the congregations, and the extraordinary demand for preaching, determined to hear trial sermons from three or four of them (at the then present session) to be considered as popular discourses, which accordingly were delivered, and sustained by a large majority of the judicature. And after an examination on various subjects, touching the ministry, which was also sustained, they were "licensed to preach the gospel within the bounds of the Transylvania Presbytery, or wherever else, God in his providence, might call them."

Certain members who had always been opposed to the measure, entered their protest against the proceedings of the majority. But the majority were not deterred thereby, from pursuing in their official capacity, that method which they conscientiously believed best calculated to promote the Redeemer's kingdom in the world.

The Synod, not long after this, divided the Transylvania Presbytery, and formed what was called the Cumberland Presbytery, the bounds of which included all the members that attended the preceding session of the Transylvania Presbytery. This act gave a decided majority in the new Presbytery to the promoters of the revival, and those who were friendly to the licensure of the aforementioned young men; which majority ever after continued and increased until the Presbytery was dissolved.

The licensing of these men, on the petition of the congregations, seemed to be a mean in God's hand of increasing instead of decreasing, the demand for supplies. They, (the preachers) *laboring both night and day*, leaving their families for a considerable length of time, preaching the word, planting new societies, and watering those that were planted, would necessarily increase such demand, if attended with divine influence. And, brethren, we need only appeal to many of you, to witness the success that evidently attended those men's labors. The feeling and experience of your own hearts are better evidences to you on that subject, than all the reasons that could be advanced. *Though you may have ten thousand instructors, yet you have not many fathers in Christ.*

The Presbytery, in pursuing what they believed to be their duty, continued from time to time to license and ordain such men, both learned and unlearned, (what is meant by unlearned here, is not a want of common English education,) as they thought would be useful laborers in the

vineyard of the Lord. And, if the old maxim be a good one, ("judge of causes by their effects,") the Presbytery will never have just cause to regret that they engaged in, and pursued such measures: for it is an incontestible fact, judging by our Lord's rule, (*By their fruit ye shall know them,*) that there are multitudes of *both men and women* who will have cause to rejoice eternally that ever they heard those men preach a crucified Christ.

The members who entered their protest, sent a petition to the next session of Synod, referring them to the protest, "which they thought should have operated as an appeal," in which they complained of various irregularities in the Cumberland Presbytery with respect to the licensure and ordination of men to the ministry. The Synod at that time did or said but little about the matter; but, at their succeeding session, they appointed a Commission of Synod to meet shortly afterwards in the bounds of the Cumberland Presbytery at Gasper river, and directed certain members of the Commission to cite previously to that meeting, all our preachers, licentiates, candidates and public exhorters,* who generally met in obedience to the citation.

We would observe here, brethren, that although the appointment of the Commission was, we hope, well intended, yet we believe it was unhappily selected as to a part of it, from what appeared in the prosecution of their mission. A number of that body, however, both preachers and elders, were meek and friendly disposed men, who felt themselves as brethren, disposed to pursue the most pacific measures,

* There was much noise about so many exhorters having been authorized by the Presbytery. The members thought with the apostle, that it was the duty and privilege of all Christians to exhort in some manner: and the design they had in licensing such as made application was to give them more weight among the people, without the most distant prospect of licensing them to preach, except those whose talents might justify such an act.

according to their order from the stated Synod to heal the breach that threatened the Church. But on the contrary it is notorious, that another part of that body were men of different tempers ; and it was an unfortunate circumstance that those men were the most forward influential members.

After the Commission had met, and also the accused, who were then known as the majority of the Cumberland Presbytery, the Commission selected from the minutes, and other sources, a number of irregularities, as chargeable against the majority of the Presbytery, all of which, however, were comprised in the two following particulars, viz. 1st. The licensing of unlearned men, or such as had not been examined on the learned languages, &c. 2nd. That those men, who were licensed, both learned and unlearned, were only required to adopt the Confession of Faith partially, that is as far as they believed it to agree with the word of God.

As to the first ground of complaint, the Presbytery not only plead the exception made in the discipline in extraordinary cases, but also the example of a number of the Presbyteries in different parts of the United States.* They

* Among the many instances of this kind that might be mentioned, are the following, viz: Mr. Beck who was received by the Presbytery in North Carolina—Mr. Bloodworth by Orange—Mr. Moore by Hanover—Mr. Marquis by Redstone, and Mr. Kemper and Abell by the Transylvania Presbytery. Likewise, in Pennsylvania many years ago, a poor illiterate man, a native of Wales, conceiving that he had an internal call to preach the gospel, made his case known to the Presbytery. But because he was not sufficiently acquainted with the English language to undergo an examination in it, or in any other but his mother tongue, the Presbytery therefore, instead of treating him without notice, sent to Virginia for President Davis, who was also a native of Wales, to perform the necessary examination previous to licensure, who on his return to Virginia, declared that he never had assisted in bringing a man into the ministry with greater freedom in his life.

In short, the majority of Cumberland Presbytery, were of opinion, that the compilers of the Confession of Faith and discipline of our Church, never intended the rules there laid down for examination and trial of candidates for the ministry, to be considered an infallible standard by which the Holy:

moreover appealed to a higher authority than either of the foregoing, which was the new TESTAMENT, and inquired if there was any precept or example in that, which condemned the practice of licensing what they (the Commission) called unlearned men to preach the gospel. It was likewise asked, if God could not as easily CALL a Presbyterian to preach, who had not a liberal education, as he could a Methodist or Baptist, a number of whom are acknowledged to be respectable and useful ministers of Jesus Christ.

As to the second point, the Synod had suggested that the candidates could have adopted the "Alkora," in the same manner they adopted the Confession of Faith. This was acknowledged to be literally true, but not applicable in the case of the young men; for the Presbytery contended that the very act of the candidates receiving the Confession at all, was an evidence that they esteemed it above all HUMAN creeds; and the exception, or condition, in which they were indulged, was only designed to meet some conscientious scruples, in points not fundamental nor essential, particularly the idea of FATALITY, that seemed to some of them to be there taught under the high and mysterious doctrine of predestination.

The reasons offered by the Presbytery, on these points, did not appear satisfactory to the Commission of Synod: therefore, much altercation took place, during which time, no doubt, Christ was wounded *in the house of his friends*, by some, perhaps, of both judicatures. It is well recollected at any rate, that the Presbytery during the debate, were

Ghost must be limited, when he calls men to that sacred office. They had no doubt but that reverend body, at the same time that they laid down those prudential rules, believed that the great Head of the Church could, and actually did, when he thought proper, bring men into the ministry without the aid of those literary qualifications: and if granted that he might in one instance, why not in more; yea, why not in many. Who will limit the Holy one of Israel?

often reminded by certain members of the Commission, that they they stood at the Commissioner's BAR! Indeed, brethren, it appeared to us very evident, that some of the leading members of that body, assumed attitudes and an authority, which but illy comported with the character of ministers of the meek and lowly Jesus sent on a pacific mission.

After much reasoning, as well as positive assertion on the subject, the Commission demanded of the Presbytery, to give up to them all those men whom they had licensed and ordained, for re-examination. The Presbytery refused, suggesting the danger of the example, and also that such a demand was without precedent. They moreover declared, that they believed the discipline of the Presbyterian Church had vested the sole power in the several Presbyteries, to judge of the faith and qualifications of their own candidates for the ministry.*

After the refusal of the Presbytery, the Moderator of the Commission, proceeded to abjure the young men to submit to their authority and be re-examined, when one of them asked liberty for himself and brethren to retire, and ask counsel of God before they would give an answer. This reasonable request was, at first, strongly opposed by one or two leading members of the Commission, but at length it was granted, and the young men retired to ask counsel of HIM who is all wise. In a short time after they returned, when they were asked, individually, if they would submit as above. They all, except one or two, who wanted longer time to deliberate, answered in the negative, for the follow-

*On the principle of the Commission's demand, no Presbytery would know when there was an addition made to their body by a new ordination, in as much as the next Synod might demand a re-examination of the newly ordained minister, judge him unqualified, and declare he should no longer preach as a Presbyterian.

ing reasons, viz: First They believed the Cumberland Presbytery, which was a regular Church Judicature, to be competent judges of the faith and abilities of their own candidates. Secondly. That they themselves had not been charged with heresy and immorality, and, if they had, the Presbytery would have been the proper Judicature first to have called them to an account. Notwithstanding, the Commission of Synod proceeded formally to prohibit all the men, learned and unlearned, whom the Cumberland Presbytery had licensed and ordained, from preaching the gospel in the name of Presbyterians, and also cited what was called the old members to attend the next stated session of Synod, to be examined on faith, and to answer for not having given up their young brethren to be re-examined!

Here, brethren, we would ask, knowing that a number of you have been thirty or forty years regular members of the Presbyterian Church, if ever you knew an instance, either in Europe or America, of a Synod undertaking to prohibit preachers, who had not been accused by their own or any other Presbytery? We would also ask, if ever you knew an instance of any reformed Church Judicature silencing a minister or ministers, who had not been charged with heresy, immorality, nor even what our discipline calls contumacy? This was certainly the case with the young men. That is, they were not charged with either of the above, yet they were prohibited and the Presbytery censured, because they would not acknowledge the authority by which it was done.

The members of Presbytery then retired (but not in a Presbyterial capacity) to consult what was best to be done, and after deliberation, they agreed to encourage the young men to continue the exercise of their respective functions, which they themselves determined to do, except in such business as required the act of a Presbytery.

Some months after, there was a general meeting or council held at Shilo, consisting of the ministers, elders, and representatives, from vacancies which formerly composed a majority of Cumberland Presbytery. At that council, it was agreed on to petition the General Assembly; and in the mean time, cease our operations as a Presbytery but continue to meet from time to time in the capacity of a council, and promote the interests of the Church as well as we could, until an answer could be obtained from the Assembly. The council, at this meeting, unanimously declared it to be their opinion, that the Commission of Synod had acted contrary to discipline, which opinion was corroborated by the next Assembly, (though not officially) according to a private letter from a respectable member of that body, a part of which is as follows:

“The unhappy differences in your quarter, so immediately succeeding what a great proportion of the Presbyterian interest in this place, believed to be a great revival of the work of God, has excited deep concern, and our General Assembly have had the matter fully before them. It appeared to be the decided opinion of the majority in the General Assembly, that no Synod had a right to proceed against ministers or individuals, except the matter shall have come before them, by appeal from the Presbytery. That only a Presbytery could call its members to account for errors in doctrine or practice.—That a man once ordained by a Presbytery is an ordained minister, though the Presbytery may have acted improperly in not requiring the due qualifications; and that even a Presbytery could not afterwards depose, but for cause arising, or made public after ordination; that licentiates are always in the power of the Presbytery to examine them and to withdraw their licensure at discretion; but, that a Synod may act against a Presbytery as such, by dissolving, dividing, censuring,

&c., consequently, that the dealings with the Cumberland Presbytery were legal, in dissolving them, and annexing them to Transylvania, but wholly improper in suspending ordained ministers, and still more improper was it, for a Commission of Synod to do it. But though the rule about knowledge of languages in our discipline is not often fully complied with, and though the rule is not found in the scriptures, yet it is so important, that though your case was an imperious one, yet they seemed to fear you had gone too far, especially in the censures. But what the General Assembly hath finally done, will appear very inconclusive on these points; because they wished to avoid offending the Synod and the Presbytery; and the minority in the Assembly took advantage of this, to make the business end as much as possible in such a manner as not to be construed against the power of Synods and General Assemblies. The General Assembly have, however, questioned the regularity of the proceedings of your Synod."

You may see, brethren, in the foregoing extracts, what was the decided opinion of what may be called the collected wisdom of the Presbyterian Church in the United States on the points for which we contend. And, perhaps, in examining the list of Commissioners who composed the Assembly, the members will be found to stand as high for learning, integrity, and piety, as a subsequent Assembly, which differed with them in opinion. You will moreover see the reason why we were not profited by the favorable opinion of the Assembly. As to the Assembly's fearing we had 'gone too far in the censures,' we will not pretend to say their fears were altogether without foundation; nevertheless, the Presbytery that have been without sin on this subject, 'may cast the first stone.'—That is, the Presbytery that have licensed as many as the Cumberland Presbytery

have done, and have licensed no improper person to preach the gospel.*

The Assembly addressed a letter to the Synod informing them, that what they had done 'was at least of questionable regularity,' and requested them to review their proceedings, and rectify what might have been done amiss. The Synod, we understood, reviewed but confirmed all their Commission had done. The council, notwithstanding, were encouraged to forward another petition, after which they were informed by a private letter, from another influential member of the Assembly, that it would be most proper for them to apply to the Synod to rescind their former order, as it respected the Presbytery; and if they refused, then for the council to appeal to the Assembly, which 'no doubt would redress their grievances.' The official letter of that Assembly, not having come to hand, the council thought it prudent to postpone doing any thing in it, until such letter could be seen. After it was seen, a number of the members of council thought the prospect of a redress of grievances not flattering; and at the next council it was voted by a large majority to go into a constituted state, and in that capacity, address the General Assembly; but by reason of the minority refusing to acquiesce in what the majority had done, the council did not still constitute a Presbytery. After some time, some of those who were of the majority, felt willing to comply with the recommendation of the member who wrote to us, and told us to go up by appeal from the Synod, but before there was an opportunity of doing it, we heard to our astonishment, that the Assembly had decided in favor of the Synod.

*The Cumberland Presbytery have reason to thank God, that every man whom they licensed, except one individual, continues to believe, preach, and practice the gospel of Christ.

This step at once superseded the necessity of an appeal ; therefore, the council generally thought it was now time to constitute into a Presbytery, and proceed to business again in that capacity. But some of the members wished to make the last effort with the Synod, which now had the business in their own hands, and the whole agreed at the Ridge Meeting House in August last, to propose their last terms, and forward them to the Transylvania Presbytery, or Synod, by two Commissioners to be appointed for that purpose, which was accordingly done, and the terms in substance were as follows :

“ We, the preachers belonging to the Council, both old and young, from a sincere desire to be in union with the general body of the Presbyterian Church, are willing to be examined on the tenets of our holy religion, by the Transylvania Presbytery, Synod, or a committee appointed for that purpose ; taking along the idea, however, that we be received or rejected as a connected body. Also, all our ministers, ordained and licentiates, retain their former authority derived from the Cumberland Presbytery. It was, moreover, understood that if the Synod should require the preachers to re-adopt the Confession of Faith that it should be with the exception of FATALITY only.” Our commissioners were directed to go, and take a copy of the above minute, without any discretionary power whatever, to alter the propositions in any way, and it was unanimously agreed and determined, that if the Synod would not accede to the propositions, that on the fourth Tuesday in October ensuing, the whole Council would go into a constituted state. The Commissioners accordingly went to the Synod ; and after their return, informed us that the Synod would not consider our case as a body, but as individuals ; neither would they suffer any of our preachers to make the exception to the Confession of

Faith. The Commissioners, notwithstanding, obtained an order for an intermediate Presbytery "to be held at Green Town, to consider the case of Mr. Hodge and others." Here, brethren, we will insert for your information, the minute of the last Council, and also the preamble to the minute of our first Presbytery.

"The Council met at Shilo, agreeably to adjournment on the fourth Tuesday in October, 1809. Whereupon Mr. King was appointed to the chair, and Thomas Donald clerk. The Council opened by prayer.

"Inquiry was made, what progress the Commissioners had made at the Transylvania Presbytery or Synod, towards bringing about a reconciliation; and how those Judicatures had treated the propositions of the Council. Mr. Hodge, after some preliminary remarks, in which he suggested that he thought the Commissioners had obtained a compliance with the substance of the Council's propositions, read a copy of a petition he had presented to the Synod, and the Synod's order on that petition. After the matter was discussed, and after the minute of the last Council on that subject was read, and compared with the petition and order above, the vote was taken whether or not the Synod had complied with the propositions of the Council, which was decided in the negative, by a very large majority. The vote was then taken, whether or not the Council would put the resolution of last Council into execution, which went solemnly to declare, that unless the Synod acceded to their propositions, they would on this day constitute into a Presbytery, which was carried in the affirmative by a large majority: after which Messrs. William and Samuel Hodge, ministers, and Thomas Donald, elder, withdrew from the Council, virtually declaring their intention to join the Transylvania Presbytery. There being then only three ordained ministers present, it was

inquired whether they were now ready to go into a constituted state; when it was found that one of them was embarrassed in his mind. The Council then adjourned, and met again, waiting the decision of that member: who at length declared he could not feel free at the present time to constitute. The Council then, together with all the licentiates and candidates present, formed into a committee and entered upon a free conversation on the subject before them; when it was finally agreed to, that each ordained minister, licentiate, elder, and representative should continue in union, and use their influence to keep the Societies in union, until the third Tuesday in March next; and then meet at the Ridge meeting house. After which, each one shall be released from this bond, unless previously to that time, three ordained ministers belonging to this body shall have constituted a Presbytery. Then, in that case, the committee will all consider the BOND of union perpetual; which Presbytery, after doing such business as they may think proper, are to adjourn to meet at the Ridge meeting house the said third Tuesday in March in a Presbyterial capacity."

SAMUEL KING, Chairman.

"In Dixon County, Tennessee State, at the Rev. M'Adow's, this 4th day of February, 1810.

"We, Samuel M'Adow, Finis Ewing, and Samuel King, regularly ordained ministers, in the Presbyterian Church, against whom no charge, either of immorality or heresy has ever been exhibited, before any of the Church Judicatures, having waited in vain more than four years, in the mean time, petitioning the General Assembly for a redress of grievances, and a restoration of our violated rights, have, and do hereby agree and determine, to constitute into a Presbytery, known by the name of the Cumberland Presbytery, on the following conditions:

“All candidates for the ministry, who may hereafter be licensed by this Presbytery, and all the licentiates or probationers, who may hereafter be ordained by this Presbytery, shall be required, before such licensure and ordination, to receive and adopt the Confession and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church, except the idea of fatality, that seems to be taught under the mysterious doctrine of Predestination. It is to be understood, however, that such as can clearly receive the Confession, without any exception, shall not be required to make any. Moreover, all licentiates before they are set apart to the whole work of the ministry, or ordained, shall be required to undergo an examination on English Grammar, Geography, Astronomy, Natural and Moral Philosophy, and Church History.* The Presbytery may also require an examination on all, or any part, of the above branches of literature before licensure, if they deem it expedient.”

Thus, brethren, we have, in the integrity of our hearts, endeavored to give you as correct and impartial an account of the rise and progress of the cause or causes, that have brought us into our present situation, as justice to ourselves, and our best recollection would admit. We have not intentionally and unjustly exposed or covered the conduct of any man or Judicature. We have only aimed at giving a clear, honest view of the matter, that you might be enabled to judge for yourselves whether we have acted with propriety or impropriety.

We think, percipitancy or rashness cannot be justly imputed to us in the present case. We have waited in an unorganized state, for more than four years, and in that time, have repeatedly prayed the Judicatures to redress

* It will not be understood that examinations on experimental religion and Theology will be omitted.

our grievances ; and have not contended for one privilege but what we conscientiously believe God's word allows us. If we had sought or desired an occasion to make a schism in the church, we had an excellent pretext, after the unprecedented conduct of the Commission of Synod towards us. But instead of this, we voluntarily suspended our operations as a Presbytery, and waited from year to year, beset on every side, hoping the matter might be settled on principles just and equitable. We said "beset on every side." Yes, brethren, a number of you know that various sectaries took the advantage of our forbearance and peculiar situation, and endeavored to rend our flourishing congregations. The swarms of heretics and fanatics also, who came down from the upper counties of Kentucky, gave us much perplexity : yet we determined, through grace, to stand firm, and continue to appeal to the reason and justice of the higher Judicatures, until we were assured they were not disposed to restore our rights. This assurance we have at length obtained, and there was no alternative left us, but either to violate our solemn vows to our brethren, act contrary to our reason and conscience, or form ourselves into a Presbytery, separate from the Kentucky Synod. This step, at first view, may alarm some of you ; but be assured, brethren, that although we are not NOW united to the Presbyterian Church by the external bond of discipline, that we feel as much union in heart as formerly ; and we would further assure you, that we have not set up as a party, inimical to the general Presbyterian church : no,—we, ourselves, are Presbyterians, and expect ever to remain so, whether united to the general body or not.

Permit us further to inform you what we do know to be an incontestable fact. That is, there are a number of ministers who are kept in the bosom of the Presbyterian

Church, who have deviated infinitely more from the Confession than we have done. One can boldly deny the imputation of Christ's active obedience to the sinner in justification, and publish it to the world—another can deny the operation of the Holy Spirit in the work of regeneration,* and yet, we, who only object to the unqualified idea of ETERNAL reprobation, cannot be indulged in that objection!

It has been said that if all the ministers belonging to the Council, had continued together, and had constituted into a Presbytery, it would have been much better. Brethren, if individuals, for reasons best known to themselves, and their God, have thought proper to change a position in which they thought God had blessed them, we have not yet felt at liberty to do likewise. We have to account to God, and our own conscience, how we have acted in this matter.

Some have feared because of the smallness of our number. Brethren, we have yet left, in the bounds of our Presbytery, almost as many ministers, exclusive of candidates, as our blessed Lord chose to spread the Gospel through the world. And whilst we acknowledge the greatest inferiority to those twelve CHAMPIONS of the Gospel, yet, we profess to believe that neither the standing, nor the reputation of a people depends on their numbers. If this were admitted, the Roman church, when it was at its zenith of superstition and idolatry, would have been the most permanent, and respectable in the world. But the reformation and subsequent events have taught us that that was not the case with her. But notwithstanding some individuals have changed their ground, yet, as far as we

* See Mr. Davis' publication in South Carolina, and Mr. Craighead's of Tennessee.

have learned, but very few of the numerous and respectable societies or congregations have abandoned us: and some individuals of those few, were partly constrained to do as they have done, from their local situation.

Some of you are afraid you cannot be supplied by the Presbytery. Brethren, the same Almighty *Lord of the harvest*, who heard your prayers on that subject ten years ago, is willing to hear again. *Is the harvest indeed great and the laborers few?* well then, pray the Lord to send more laborers.

Some fear lest the Presbytery should take too much liberty in licensing and ordaining unlearned men. If by this you mean, you are afraid the Presbytery, in some instances, will dispense with the dead languages, your fears are well grounded. But if you are afraid we will license and ordain without a good English education, we hope your fears are without foundation. And while we thus candidly declare our intention to receive men as candidates, without a knowledge of the languages, who are men of good talents, and who appear to be evidently CALLED of God, believing, as we do, that there are thousands in the Presbyterian Church of such description, who would make more able, respectable, and more useful ministers of Jesus Christ, than many who say they have been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel: we would nevertheless recommend it to all parents who have sons who promise fair for the ministry, to have them taught the Greek language, especially the Greek Testament. Some of us intend to do ourselves what we here recommend, and thereby more fully convince you of our sincerity.

We would just add, that we have it in view as a Presbytery, to continue, or make another proposition to the Synod of Kentucky, or some other Synod, for a re-union. If we can obtain it without violating our natural and

Scriptural rights, it will meet the most ardent wish of our hearts; if we cannot, we hope to be enabled to commit ourselves and cause to HIM who is able to keep us. Brethren, if we live at the feet of the Redeemer, and feel constant dependence on Him, we are not afraid but that he will be our God and director. And if *God be for us, who can be against us?* We therefore entreat you, brethren, *to watch and be sober.*

Cultivate friendship with all societies of Christians, who maintain the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, and whose lives comport with their profession; but avoid the multitude of deceivers, who have gone out into the world, and strike at the root of all real religion. Avoid them, we entreat you, as you would the open enemies of the cross of Christ.

Gird on the whole armor of God. Fight the good fight of faith, live in peace, and the God of peace shall be with you. Amen.

SAMUEL M'ADOW, Moderator.

Test. YOUNG EWING, Clerk.

Notwithstanding the peculiar difficulties with which this infant Church has had to contend, its members have continued to increase, and every year has augured more and more favorably for its stability.

The first Presbytery became so much enlarged in the course of three years, that in April, 1813, at the Beach meeting house, Tennessee, it was resolved to divide it and form three subordinate Judicatories, which should constitute a Synod. The following minute is the preamble to this decision, and presents a pleasing prospect of the gradual increase of Cumberland Presbyterians:

“Whereas, the Cumberland Presbytery have made every reasonable effort for a re-union with the Presbyterian

Church ; and whereas, the extent of our bounds and the number and local situation of our members, now render it inconvenient to do business in but one Presbytery ; and whereas, the constitution of a Synod is desirable, and we hope will be productive of good consequences in various ways, particularly as a tribunal having appellant jurisdiction : Resolved," etc.

Five of the members were ordered to meet at Mt. Carmel meeting house, Tennessee, on the first Tuesday of the ensuing August, to constitute the Elk Presbytery, and four others were appointed to constitute the Logan Presbytery, on the fifth Tuesday of the same month, at Red River meeting house, Kentucky. These Presbyteries were directed to meet the Cumberland Presbytery on the fifth of the next October at the Beach meeting house, Tennessee, to constitute the Cumberland Synod, which was done accordingly.

Soon after the close of the late war, the tide of emigration began to flow rapidly westward, which greatly multiplied demands for preaching ; so that it seemed for a time, utterly impossible to meet them. The members of the Church, however, were requested by Synod to observe the fourth Monday of May, 1817, as a day of fasting and prayer to Almighty God to revive his work and send forth more laborers into his vineyard. The Great Head of Zion evidently heard the cries of his people ; the succeeding summer was a time of much interest to the Church ; and in the fall many young men of promising talents became candidates for the ministry. This added fresh life to the body, and inspired new settlements of the West and South with a hope of yet being supplied with preaching. This hope was not disappointed. A goodly number of young laborers soon entered the field for the purpose of gathering up the

scattered disciples of Christ, and to call guilty multitudes to repentance. The consequence was, those that had been sighing in the wilderness and weeping by the water courses, because there was none to break to them the bread of life, were made to cry out *how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth.* Stupid sinners were also awakened, and many precious revivals of religion immediately commenced.

Here was discovered more clearly than ever, the providence of God in raising up the Cumberland Presbyterians. A large portion of the western population were partial to the Presbyterian form of Church government, though they could not receive all their doctrinal sentiments. But had the Presbyterian sentiments been generally embraced, still they were at that time comparatively without funds to educate ministers, or to send them into the field after they were educated, and there were no prospects of salaries from the frontiers; therefore, but few of their clergymen were to be found in the whitened harvest of the West. It is also true, that the peculiarities of the Methodists and Baptists were thought by many to be unsupported by the word of God; consequently they were unwilling to place themselves and families under the ministry of either denomination. At this important crisis, the *Lord of the harvest* was pleased to raise up the Cumberland Presbyterians, and direct them to take a midway stand between Calvinism and Arminianism; and to open a school for the purpose of qualifying men for the ministry that had been previously unknown in the Presbyterian Church, viz: *an itinerant school.* In this seminary, scores of young heralds of the cross were fitted for the sacred desk, and strange as it may appear, many of them far surpassed the

College missionaries of the East. While some were waiting for Education Societies to open the door for them into the ministry, and others who had already entered, were waiting for Missionary Societies to send them into the field, these Cumberland Pioneers moved on with the tide of emigration, submitting to all the privations and hardships peculiar to new settlements, with but little prospect of any reward in this life, except the pleasure of saving souls. Upon the whole, I firmly believe, that thousands are now in heaven, and others are on their way thither, who never would have been saved, had it not been for the labors of Cumberland Presbyterians, and that God has yet an important part for them to act in spreading the conquest of the Redeemer's Cross.

The following brief sketch of the constitution of the several Presbyteries, will show the rapid growth of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, in the course of the last twelve years.

At Sugg's Creek, Tennessee, October 22, 1819, the McGee Presbytery was stricken off from the Logan Presbytery, by an order of Synod, and ordered to be constituted in Missouri, (then a Territory,) on the fourth Tuesday of May following.

The Synod in session at Russellville, October 18, 1821, divided the Elk Presbytery, and directed two new Presbyteries to be constituted—one to be known by the name of the Alabama, and the other the Tennessee Presbytery. At this Synod, also, the Anderson Presbytery was stricken off from the Logan Presbytery, and the Lebanon from the Nashville Presbytery.

By an order of Synod, at the Beach meeting house, Tennessee, October 16, 1822, the Illinois Presbytery was stricken off from Anderson and McGee Presbyteries.

On the 24th of October, 1823, by the authority of

Synod, at Russellville, the Alabama Presbytery, owing to the remote situation of its members from each other, the difficulty of meeting in time of high water, etc., was dissolved, and a part of its members, with two from the Tennessee Presbytery, were appointed to constitute the Bigby Presbytery. The balance of the members of Alabama were attached to the Tennessee Presbytery. At this same Synod, the McGee Presbytery was divided for the purpose of constituting the Arkansas Presbytery.

At Cane Creek meeting house, October 22, 1824, owing to additions to the ministry, change of residence, etc., preachers were appointed by Synod to re-organize the Alabama Presbytery. At this session, the Hopewell Presbytery was also stricken off from the Nashville Presbytery. It was, moreover, deemed indispensable either to divide the Synod and form a General Assembly, or revise the Constitution of the Church, so as to admit of a delegated Synod. The question was therefore submitted to the consideration of the several Presbyteries.

At the Synod at Princeton, Kentucky, October 25, 1825, the Anderson Presbytery was divided, and the Indiana Presbytery required to be constituted.

A constitutional majority of the Presbyteries reported to this Synod in favor of a General Assembly.

After discussing the question at some length, by mutual consent, a decision was postponed till another meeting of the Synod.

At this session, Commissioners were appointed to select a site for Cumberland College. They met in January following, and after examining several places, decided in favor of the vicinity of Princeton. The institution went into practical operation on the first day of the ensuing March, on the manual labor plan. It now numbers about sixty students, and is in a tolerably flourishing condition.

No new Presbyteries were formed in 1826.

The Barnett and Knoxville Presbyteries were appointed to be constituted, by order of Synod in session at Russellville, Kentucky, November 21, 1827. The former was taken from the McGee and the latter from the Lebanon Presbyteries.

October 21, 1828, the Synod at Franklin, Tennessee, ordered the St. Louis Presbytery to be constituted, and to be taken from the Arkansas Presbytery. Also Princeton Presbytery was stricken from Anderson and the Sangamon from Illinois Presbyteries.

The subject of Temperance was discussed at this session of Synod, and the following resolution unanimously adopted :—

“*Resolved*, That the preachers belonging to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, both ordained and licensed, and likewise the different members, be requested to unite in discountenancing the unnecessary use of ardent spirits in their several congregations and families, and wherever else their influence may extend.”

Pursuant to this resolution, Temperance Associations have been formed throughout the bounds of the Church, and hundreds and thousands have been induced to abandon entirely the use of the intoxicating fluid.

The subject of a General Assembly was again brought before the Synod, while in session at Franklin, and after considerable discussion, it was resolved to come to a decision on this important matter. Before the vote was taken, an aged member arose and recited the solemn manner in which the first *Presbytery* was constituted. The fear of God seemed to fall on every mind, and breathless silence pervaded the house for several minutes. It was then proposed that the oldest preacher present, should implore direction from heaven. The Rev. Jas. B.

Porter, being the oldest member present, was called on to discharge this duty. Before prayer, he recurred in a brief, but feeling manner, to the difficulties through which Cumberland Presbyterians had already passed, and to the kind providence of God, that had been displayed in their protection. During prayer, much access seemed to be enjoyed to a throne of grace; and every member of the house appeared to realize his responsibility to the Great Head of the Church, for the part he was about to act. The votes were then called for—when it appeared a large majority were in favor of a General Assembly.

The Cumberland Synod was then, by mutual consent, divided, and the four following Synods ordered to be constituted, viz: The Missouri Synod, embracing the McGee, Barnett, Illinois, St. Louis, Sangamon and Arkansas Presbyteries: the Green River Synod, composed of the Logan, Anderson, Indiana and Princeton Presbyteries: the Franklin Synod, embracing the Nashville, Lebanon, Knoxville and Hopewell Presbyteries: the Columbia Synod, consisting of the Elk, Tennessee, Bigby, and Alabama Presbyteries.

The bounds of these Synods have been much enlarged since they were constituted, and the following new Presbyteries formed, viz: Within the limits of the Green River Synod, the Kentucky, Washington and Wabash Presbyteries: in Franklin Synod, the Forked-Deer and Hatchey Presbyteries: and in the Columbia Synod, the Elyton and Mississippi Presbyteries.

It will be seen from this brief sketch, that Cumberland Presbyterians have, at present, twenty-five Presbyteries, four Synods, and a General Assembly.

Their number of preachers is thought to be near four hundred, besides many candidates for the ministry. But inasmuch as a statistical account of their congregations

and ministers has never yet been made out, their numerical strength cannot at this time be certainly known. Some have expressed surprise that this should have been neglected until so late a period. It is my view, however, very far from being a censurable omission. Too frequent a display of numbers has always seemed to me to savor of ostentation; and I have thought such conduct was apt to beget an *undue* and *unsanctified* eagerness for the *procurement* of numbers. Nevertheless, as there appears to be so much anxiety among other denominations, to know the number of members in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and some very inaccurate conjectures have recently been published on this subject, it is probable their statistics will be shortly submitted to the public.

The operations of Cumberland Presbyterians have heretofore been principally confined to the following portion of the valley of the Mississippi, viz: The States of Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Illinois, Indiana, and the Arkansas Territory. This year, however, they have had a most glorious revival in the western part of the State of Pennsylvania, the influence of which is felt to some extent in the State of New York. Several flourishing societies have recently been formed in that section of country—and the work is still progressing.

They have kept up the practice of holding camp-meetings in their congregations, ever since their organization as a body. Indeed, this custom was *first introduced* by that part of the Presbyterian Church, that afterwards became Cumberland Presbyterians. About three hundred of these meetings are now held every year, at which many profess to obtain religion: on some occasions two hundred and upwards.

At first, this denomination, like all other branches of

the Church, *while in infancy*, met with considerable opposition from other sectaries. They have, however, been blessed with much union in feeling and effort, as well as in doctrine, among themselves, and have ever kept their pulpits and communion open to all orthodox Christians.

They have cordially united with other denominations in advancing the benevolent enterprises of the present day. The salutary influence of Sabbath Schools is felt, to a considerable extent throughout their bounds, and they have had for several years a Missionary School in the Chickasaw nation. It has recently, however, been deemed expedient to close the operations of this institution, owing to the unsettled state of the Indians.

On the subject of the doctrines of Cumberland Presbyterians, I need say but little, inasmuch as their Confession of Faith has long since been before the public. I will subjoin, however, the following extract from Buck's Theological Dictionary, which will give a brief outline of their views.

1st. "They hold that Adam was made upright, pure and *free*; that he was necessarily under the moral law, which binds all intelligences; and having transgressed it, he was consequently, with all his posterity exposed to eternal punishment and misery.

2d. That Christ, the second Adam, represented just as many as the first, consequently made an atonement for all, "which will be testified in due time." But that the benefit of that atonement will be only received by the true believer.

3d. That all Adam's family are totally depraved, "conceived in sin; going astray from the womb, and all children of wrath;" therefore must "be born again;" justified and sanctified, or they never can enter into the kingdom of God.

4th. That justification is by faith alone as the **INSTRUMENT**; by the merits of Christ's active and passive obedience, as the *meritorious* cause; and by the operation of God's Spirit, as the *efficient*, or active cause.

5th. That as the sinner is justified on the account of Christ's righteousness being imputed or accounted to him; on the same account he will be enabled to go on from one degree of grace to another, in a pro-

gressive life of sanctification, until he is fitted to be gathered into the garner of God; who will certainly take to glory every one who has been really justified; that is, he, Christ, has become wisdom, (light to convince) righteousness, (to justify) sanctification, (to cleanse) and redemption, (to glorify) to every truly regenerated soul.

6th. That there are three persons in one God, co-equal, essential, and eternal; or the Father, Word, and Holy Ghost: that the mediator is very God and very man; two distinct natures in one person; therefore while the humanity obeys and suffers, there is infinite worth or merit given to that obedience and suffering, by the union of the divinity.

They dissent from the Confession—in, 1st, That there are no *eternal* reprobates. 2d, That Christ died not for a *part only*, but for *all* mankind. 3d, That all infants, dying in infancy, are saved through Christ, and sanctification of the Spirit. 4th, That the Spirit of God operates on the *world*, or as co-extensively as Christ has made the atonement, in such a manner as to leave all men inexcusable.

As to the doctrines of predestination and election, they think, (with many eminent and modest divines who have written on the subject,) they are mysterious, and they are not well pleased with the application that rigid Calvinists, or Arminians, make of them. They think the truth, on *that*, as well as many other points in divinity, lies between the opposite extremes. They are confident, however, that those doctrines should not, on the one hand be so construed as to make any thing the creature has done, or *can* do, at all meritorious in his salvation; or to lay any ground to say “well done I;” or to take the least degree of the honor of our justification and perseverance from God’s unmerited grace, and Christ’s pure righteousness. On the other hand, they are equally confident those doctrines should not be so construed as to make God the author of sin, directly or indirectly; either of Adam’s sin, or any subsequent sin of his fallen race; or to contradict the express and repeated declarations of God’s word, on the extent of the atonement and operations of the Spirit; or to contradict the sincerity of God’s expostulations with sinners, and make his oath to have no meaning, when he swears he has no pleasure in their death; or to resolve the whole character of the Deity into his sovereignty, without a due regard to all other of his adorable attributes. Finally, they think those doctrines ought to be thought and spoken of in a consistency with God’s moral government, which always has for its object the happiness of his intelligent creatures, when it consists with his justice, and the honor of the divine throne.”

They baptize infants, where one or both the parents are believers in Christ, and permit believing adults, who have not been baptized in infancy, to select their own mode of

baptism. They are induced to grant this privilege from a belief that the Bible neither specifies the quantity of water to be used in baptism, nor the mode of receiving it. Therefore, they think the subjects of this ordinance have as good a right to a choice for themselves, as communicants have at the Lord's Table, some of whom take more bread and wine, and others a less quantity. Cumberland Presbyterians view these two ordinances equal in point of importance, and do not feel at liberty to impose restrictions in administering them, where the word of God imposes none.

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